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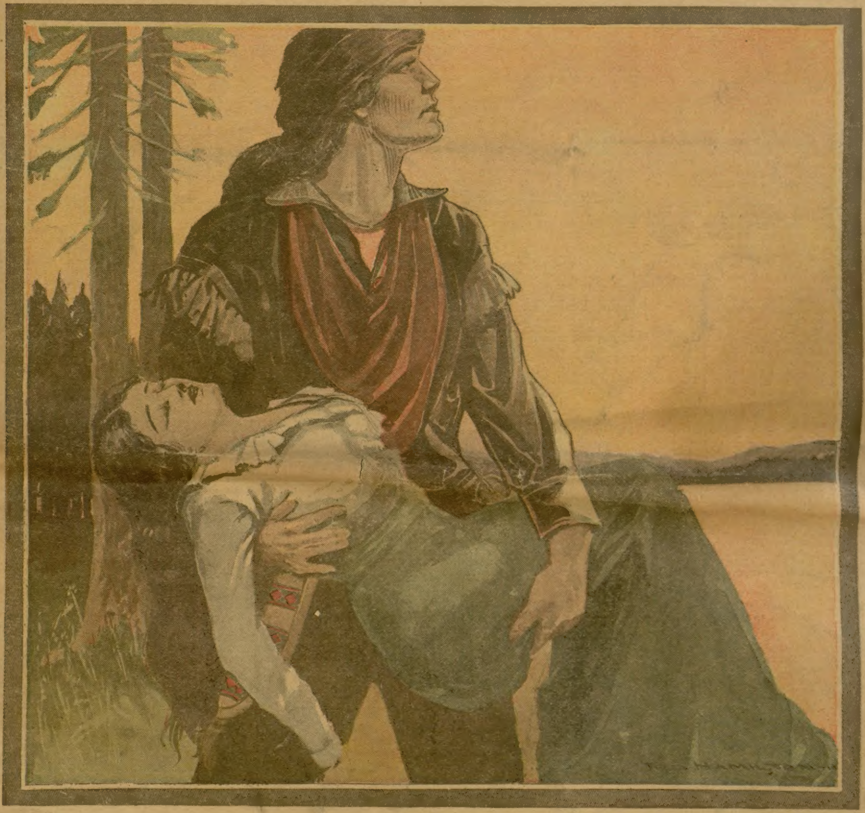

Strong Jacob of Eden

Or, The Wilderness Waif -:- -:- By William H. Manning

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CHAPTER I.

IT WAS an atom of civilization in the wilderness, that group of buildings in the glade on the bank of the Columbia River. The gleaming water met far-reaching forests, tenanted mainly by wild animals and undisciplined Indians. It was a journey of two days by boat to the nearest post of the fur-trading companies, and one of indefinite time by land, and in all that distance no white man was to be found save now and then a wandering hunter. The wilderness lay solitary, grim, masterful, and often forbidding.

Among the log buildings a man was pacing slowly, his movements full of subdued life and strength, a rifle across his arm, but his manner pacific and thoughtful. Walking, he gave frequent attention to one of the structures above which floated a white flag, and there was something in his close attention that was impressive. A young woman came to the window of another building and looked out with sober passivity that gave place to something else as she saw the pacing man.

"Ben Reed!" she murmured. "He watches over the one he has so strangely brought here. He is a noble son of the forests. Not content with doing good for a time, he bears his charge in mind and longs to see her fully restored. Good Ben! Large-hearted man!"

She watched him half-unconsciously, vaguely noticing his muscular build, his plain hunting-suit, his face that was grim and set when in repose, but, as she well knew, was capable of expressing the humor that lurked back of the grimness. A dweller in all parts of the wilds, he had imbibed of the untamed woods, mountains, rivers, and lakes, and their stamp was upon him, but unalloyed by duplicity and evil passions.

Indignation and relentless wrath he could show when persecution called for them, and signs of this fact Judith Ashwood could see as she marked his face and movements now.

"He beats upon his rifle-barrel with his fingers," she murmured, "and it means something. He longs to avenge the wrongs of the girl in the hospital, and if he learns who is guilty that person may well take to flight. I cannot bring myself to blame him, tho it is a mood not in keeping with the character of this place."

Judith was right. The place was Eden Mission, the home of peace and good will to mankind. Here Caleb Harper had planted his post for the betterment of the neighboring Indians. Representing no particular religious body, he established a system aimed to regulate the souls, bodies, and minds of his red people. Besides religious teaching there was instruction in English from books, and his knowledge of medicine met a need not to be filled by the other two.

For five years his undertaking had prospered, his establishment grown, his good deeds been many, and his fame increased. Too mild to force his way, he had made it by better methods, winning hearts and heads where aggressive steps would have failed. Red men and white alike called him "Father Caleb," but the meaning was loving tribute, not religious significance.

Judith, leaning against the window side, stirred as she saw the missionary himself, now advancing to join Ben Reed. Her expression grew softer, her eyes tender, for she gave a depth of affection to Father Caleb.

Sixty years of age, he was of medium height, broad-shouldered, a little inclined to corpulency, while his smooth-shaven face was alight with good will and inward peace, as marked as was his Quaker-like style of dress. He reached the pacing man.

"Benjamin," he began abruptly, "I have just been grieved by hearing one of my people suggest that you will soon be leaving us. I am loath to see you go so soon.. You know that all well-behaved persons are welcome to stay here indefinitely, and no one is more welcome than you. Do the woods call you so strongly?"

"Well, no," Ben answered slowly, "I've heard no call yet, and I admit that I don't like to go until—until——"

He paused and glanced at the building over which floated the white flag, and the glance was eloquent.

"I understand," said Father Caleb. "Your heart is with your ward."

"No, no!" was the hasty *rejoinder.* "My heart ain't that kind. It goes out to woods and waters, mountains and prairies, horses and dogs, and I hope I'm not uncharitable to men and women, but as for the aforesaid heart being with any young woman—no, no; it's my mind that's there."

"I accept your correction, Benjamin," replied the missionary, smiling. "Well, then, you wish to witness her recovery?"

"I sartinly do."

"Here is a place of peace, a spot where dark passions and lawless deeds have no part, and harmony and good will are supreme. Resentment is unknown here. Why, not one of us even has a secret from the others. All is open; we constantly share our daily thoughts. Here is rest and peace. I pray you, tarry with us."

"I think I will for a while. I'm not expected anywhere. I'm a lone shrub of the earth, and no chick nor child calls for Ben Reed. I'm my whole family. Speaking of her, I do want masterfully to see the battle out. You say the fever is no worse?"

"No worse, but she is a very sick woman."

"No ray of reason yet?"

"Unfortunately, none."

"Poor creature! What would she have done but for this place? That was what was in my mind when I was bringing her here, so I brought her with speed."

"It was nobly done," declared Father Caleb.

"No, no, 'twas nothing!" expostulated the honest hunter, confused by this praise. "I did the natural thing, and it was only to paddle."

"But your energy, your wonderful speed——"

"Anybody could do that."

The missionary subdued the smile that demanded place on his face. Knowing that Ben was so oddly modest that commendation led him into a bashful flutter, he avoided further praise.

"Well, Benjamin, I came to you to secure the details of the case, having heard only the outline, you know. Please tell me all."

"So I will, Father Caleb. I'm no 'great shakes as a historian, but this case would make a tongueless man talk like Daniel Webster. You see, I was lying on a wooded bluff, right by the bank of the Columbia, letting the trees, shrubs, rocks, and other things soak into my system thru my pores, when I see a canoe coming along the river. It held two persons, a black-bearded man who paddled, and a girl who sat kind of drooping. Nary word was they speaking, and this and other circumstances made me uneasy as I watched. They were well distant from where I lay, but I disliked the cut of his jib, and somehow got the impression she was unhappy. Sort of a wolf and lamb party, I thought, tho why I thought so that quick I couldn't tell fully.

"Finally he spoke to her, a few words were said, and then the bow of the canoe was turned away from me. They made for what I saw was a little island, landed, made the canoe fast and walked in among the trees and disappeared from my sight. Pretty soon a thin ribbon of smoke rose above the trees, and I knew a fire had been made.

"Still uneasy, I waited and watched, and arrived at a decision. When it was dark I was going to that island, myself.

"Darkness finally fell and I swum over, poked along, and got nigh the fire soft-footed as a painter. I see her lying asleep on a blanket, and her face was fine, but there was a paleness, a drawn look, a contraction of the brows that made me think she was under bodily or mental suffering.

"The man I could see but little, for the heavy, dark shadder of a fir-tree was full on him, but, somehow, the black beard had a furtive slope and even his hat a sinister perch. As I really knowed nothing about things, you will see he had got onto my narves. I stood still and looked hard but moved never a foot. Instinct told me it would be no lost time to wait and watch.

"Maybe it was half an hour later that Black Beard looked at his companion, not openly, but in a secret, sidelong way, and I allow it did not look right. He kept up them stealthy, suspicious lookings for some fifteen minutes, and then got up and stole softly to the fire. He looked at her some more and made a series of plain gratings with his feet, but she slept on. I knew he was testing the reality of her sleep.

"Satisfied, he picked up his rifle, hatchet, blanket, and all the food—all of it, mind you—looked once more, and stole away like a black shadder. I followed. He reached his canoe, floated it, placed all his stuff in it, and was about to enter, when the girl came running.

"Father Caleb, the next things was terrible. She wildly asked if he was going to desert her in the wilderness, to be starved or killed by wild beasts, and after trying to bluff he said right out plain that he always intended to leave her so, and was going to do it.

"In her terror she had grasped his arm, and she began to plead, but he flung her heavily aside, and she fell with a sickening sound. Then he leaped into the canoe—but so did I!

"I leaped, and gave him a stiff punch with my elbow as I did it, but we asked too much of that canoe. It went over like a flash, spilling us both into the water. I rallied, got my bearings, swum for the craft, got it, towed it ashore and looked for Black Beard. He wasn't to be seen, so I turned to the young woman. She was trying to get to her feet. I helped her, and got some eloquent in assuring her she was with one who would save her and care for her and use her right. Then—poor creature!—she fainted dead away.

"Forgetting the canoe I carried her to the fire and did what I could to revive her, but she didn't come to as I wanted. All night she lay unconscious, muttering wildly, and it needed but one look to see she was in high fever. I knew there was but one thing to do, and that was to get her here. The canoe remained as I left it, so I carried her to it, got in and fell to like a beaver at the paddle. She was so flighty I feared she would jump overboard, but she didn't. She only lay and muttered. Well, it was a long ways, but I got her here."

The hunter paused abruptly.

"It was grandly done!" cried Father Caleb.

"No, no, it was nothing!" declared Ben, again confused. "I had to go somewhere, myself, so why not fetch her along?"

"Always modest!" murmured the missionary. "You say she muttered. Did she give no clew to her name?"

"No, and she never mentioned other names. Her one complaint was of darkness—darkness! It was said over and over, tho with variations."

"It has been so since you brought her here. She lies in delirium, fever-stricken, muttering much, but giving us no name, and no hint as to her past. She is a nameless waif of the wilderness. Unfortunate girl! she may not survive. You saw no more of the black-bearded man?"

"Not a thing, and the fact that the unguarded canoe was left alone shows that he got a stiff rap from my elbow. Floated away somewheres."

"Perhaps he was drowned."

"Not he! The water would bring him to some point on the river bank, and then he would be all right. I know the current there."

"If found," said Father Caleb, with earnest feeling, "he shall be reproved with severity—perhaps even chastised."

Ben Reed's fingers fell to working on the barrel of his rifle again, and he half-closed his eyes to hide their expression. He had his idea of what punishment would be for the inhuman outrage if he ever identified the miscreant. Doubtful of his ability to control his tongue, he hastened to change the subject.

"So you expect a new member for your family today?"

"Yes," Father Caleb replied; "my coming assistant, Jacob Lee."

"What's he like?"

"I never have seen him, but he comes highly recommended."

"Quite a family, you have. Let me see! There's you and your good wife——"

"Yes, Mary Jane," agreed the missionary, with a pleased smile.

"True! Then, not counting your red servants and pupils, there's Judith Ashwood, that uncommon fine girl whose hair has stole the color away from the sun, and Martha Otis, t'other teacher, and little Indian Abigail, and Thomas, the cook. Six! Your new assistant will make seven."

Father Caleb's eyes brightened, and he plainly wanted to talk, but, at that moment, was called away to attend to some mission duty.

Ben Reed resumed his pacing, rifle over arm, and often he glanced at the hospital building and shook his head. There lay the wilderness waif, fever-smitten, unconsciously battling for her life, and the hunter was swept by alternate waves of sympathy for her and resentment against the unknown author of her troubles.

Pat, pat, pat!—his fingers beat against the barrel of the weapon unconsciously. It was much and yet little, but the fingers that beat could pull a trigger, and almost the keen eyes imagined the unknown covered by the sights of the unerring rifle. What would happen then—Ben knew!

Judith had lingered by the window, listening, but had moved away and entered the hospital after the missionary left. For the time she had forgotten Ben, for other matters pressed upon her attention, and her thoughts were not wholly of the nameless waif under the white flag.

Judith was as fair as the flowers that blossomed daintily in the encompassing woods. The mission Indians had named her the "White Lily," because of her hair and complexion. During the year she had been at Father Caleb's she had been found capable, interested in her work, a valuable helper, and of an attractive personality. The missionary and his wife loved her like a daughter, and she was a favorite with all others.

On this day, contrary to the habit with her, she was not cheerful, and, when released from watching in the hospital, she went to her private room and looked out hurriedly. The river was before her, broad, majestic, a fit subject for admiration, but she saw only one thing in its sweep toward the west, and that was that no canoe visibly rode its waters. She sighed like one greatly relieved. She was relieved—relieved, strangely enough, because she did not see Jacob Lee.

All day the mission people had watched for the man who was to be an assistant under their roofs, a member of their family, an everyday companion, but none other with the feelings that beset Judith.

"Thank Heaven!" she now murmured. "He is not yet in sight. There is still reprieve, tho perhaps only for an hour, or only a few minutes. What is beyond yonder trees? Jacob Lee—he is somewhere! He is coming! What shall I do? There is yet time to avoid discovery, time for flight. Shall I go?"

The question had been in her mind all day. Departure was easy. One rod into the forest and she would be out of sight; a mile, and search would be well-nigh useless. She would be free from eyes she dreaded, alone with nature, and alone with her secret and the wild beasts of the wilderness. She rested her head wearily on her hand and looked with now-unseeing eyes into distance.

"I must decide!" she thought. "Shall I go or stay?"

Ah! Father Caleb, are you sure, with Judith, your teacher, meditating in her room and Ben Reed pacing before the door, rifle on arm, that there is no secret and no resentment near the walls of your home?

CHAPTER II.

THE day drew near its end. A measure of its light and warmth was going with the westering sun, the forest undergrowth grew darker of appearance, and the visible paths had a cold and inhospitable look. All this Judith saw, and her inclination to go into that labyrinth of danger did not increase with the change.

While she hesitated there was a stir, the sound of voices on the other side of the building, and the ring of the missionary's cordial welcome. She went quickly to the next room and looked out secretly. Her face grew paler. Father Caleb was there, and with him was a man not of the mission family.

"Jacob Lee has come!" she whispered. "Now he will see me, and then—but no; it is not he. A hunter, I think, and, with his rifle and knife, like anything but a missionary. Ah; it is Mark Ballard!"

The man she had named had been at the misison before, and, evidently, had not found her company uncongenial. She was not ill disposed toward Mark Ballard. Even now, in an hour of conflicting emotions, she gazed at him with interest.

A little above the average height, and straight as the sapling of the forest, he had both muscular development and the lithe grace so becoming to the sons of men. He was one worthy of second survey.

Judith saw, and then, as Ballard's attention wandered, she stepped hastily back and returned to her own room. She went in fresh agitation.

"Why does he come?—this rover!" she murmured. "Were not the others enough to witness my downfall? Must all who have known me here look upon my disgrace? This man of the woods—this Mark Ballard—he has thought better of me. Why has he come?

She knelt by the window and meditated deeply. There had been times in the past weeks when, often without realizing what she did, she walked a little beyond the mission buildings and, gazing forestward, had wondered if he was near. Then, she would not have turned away from him; now, her desire for flight grew stronger because of his proximity.

She rose quickly, gathered up a few of her possessions, and made them into a compact parcel. Her resolution was taken; that hour should be her last in the mission.

There was a knock at the door. Answering it, she found an Indian servant, who said the sick woman was in increased delirium, and that, as she had exerted a greater influence upon the waif than any one else, her presence at the bedside was desired. The summons was not in vain. Judith put self aside for the time, concealed her parcel, and went as requested. Her flight could be made at a later hour.

The suffering woman had need of every aid that could be given to her, and Judith applied herself to the work. She bathed the heated brow, caressed the fluttering hands, and spoke in tones that were to the patient's ears like water to the parched earth. The waif heard without sensing the words, but the magnetism of her watcher penetrated the darkened cell of life. Her movements were less restless, her expression less wild, and her moans more infrequent.

Time passed. Her eyelids drooped; her strained eyes were covered. At last sleep was complete, tho far from restful, for the fever held the stolen tabernacle. Judith could do no more, and she drew back and was at leisure.

Conflicting emotions pressed upon her. She was the one person who could soothe the sufferer, and she longed to stay and give the needed aid, rather than serve her own ends by flight, but an afterthought suggested that perhaps this would not be permitted when Jacob Lee had told his story.

The question pressed upon her—self, or the waif?—flight or sacrifice? She again stood over the patient and surveyed her with melancholy interest.

The unknown was as young as herself, refined and intelligent. Judith's heart went out to her, and, at last, she bent and pressed her lips to the fevered brow.

"I will stay!" she decided.

The decision was earnest, but not so easily maintained. If the wilderness did not call to Judith, the mission urged her away. It had become a place of dread, and she longed to get away from it, away from perils that menaced her. She wavered, but did not yield.

Later, the other nurse came to renew her watch. Judith was free. With freedom came a longing for the outer air. Below, she could hear Father Caleb entertaining his guests in his hearty way. There would be but little danger of interruption, and her decision was soon made. Throwing a shawl over her head she descended by the back way, opened the door, looked hurriedly, glided across the glade, and was in the edge of the woods.

The air and the green canopy met her as good friends, and a degree of calmness settled upon her. She could think more clearly now. She walked back and forth, feeling less of trepidation. The lighted mission was on the one hand and the dark wilderness on the other. Never had the somber way thru the interlaced trees seemed less repellent. She paused and looked long and earnestly into the darkness.

The forest had acquired a mystic voice. It seemed to call to her, to summon her away from the dwellings of men and to its heart. Freedom was there, and there, too, was a place where no man told the secrets of others. The panther, the bear, and the wolf were there, but not censure, and the fangs of the one were not sharper than the voice of the other.

She took a step toward the depths of the forest. Then a sound, not mystic but real, reached her ears—the dip of a paddle on the river. With quick steps she moved to the bank.

A canoe was advancing, and two men were within. Was it Jacob Lee, at last? The pulsations of her heart rivaled the noise of the paddle, as, leaning forward over the water, she waited in agitation for the answer to her fears. Words were spoken in the craft, and she drew a deep sigh of relief, for both speakers were Indians. Jacob Lee was not yet come.

The river-goers passed by and left her reprieved. She felt then that there was but little danger of the new assistant arriving that night. In all probability the journey had been so tiresome that he and his guide had camped somewhere by the stream. The canoe men, perhaps, belonged to the village of Bending Willow, with whose people the missionaries labored.

Judith took a few minutes for meditation, and was still considering when steps sounded behind her. She turned and found a man there. It was Mark Ballard, he of the forest wanderings.

She had been discovered first, and he accosted her quickly, even with eagerness. He had longed to meet her, and, tho he did not tell her so, he spoke words that fell clearly and well from his lips. They were only words of greeting, and their followers, but they were much to him. The lily of the mission had drawn him from the forest; her personality had been with him in camp and on the trail. Now he had come and there was magic in her presence.

For a time she forgot her troubles and talked freely. When she remembered—when she thought of Jacob Lee—she strove to hide her emotions and act naturally.

It was half an hour later when they turned their faces toward the mission. He saw her safely within, and she went to her room. Once there, she looked out of the window and reviewed the situation. There was still time for flight, but the mystic voice of the wilderness was not colder than its promise of asylum. Her fears did not abate, but she tried to believe all was not yet lost. It would be time to flee when no hope remained.

Two hours later the mission buildings were still, and the only light was that which burned in the room of the nameless waif. In her own apartment Judith slept.

The sun was well up in the sky when she awoke. Exhausted by physical and mental trials she had, as she soon discovered, slept later than usual. She rose, dressed, and went to a window which opened on the little square made by the buildings. Only one individual was visible. Ben Reed paced back and forth, rifle on arm, as if he had never stopped during the night, but his keen eyes were not those of a weary watcher.

Sight of him gave her a slight start. Better than any of the other regular inmates of the mission she knew what was in his mind.

His years had been passed where each man was a law to himself and gun and knife were the instruments of retribution—and his wrath burned warmly against the unknown enemy of the waif of the island. He was now a bloodhound held in check, and the expected revelation of the sick woman would mean the breaking of the leash. The breaking was likely to bring calamity to whoever was guilty.

Presently Judith descended to the lower floor of the building. There she met one of the red pupils and learned that the expected assistant had arrived. Jacob Lee was in the living-room with Father Caleb and the rest of the mission family and the rover.

The tidings were a severe blow to the teacher. Since Jacob had not come the previous day, she anticipated a reprieve of some hours. The crisis had arrived with startling suddenness. She knew, too, that she was expected to join the others, and the child made delay impossible by running into the room with the announcement that she was coming.

Judith stopped. Power of motion seemed to desert her. She leaned against the wall and stood like one breathless. Her face was pale and her lips quivered. Jacob Lee! She had known him as a man far from severe, and never intentionally unjust, but he had rigid ideas of duty. His sense of proper adherence to duty was so overpowering that he was often led to do that which, unknown to him, was like the deeds of one who was inexorable. Now he would recognize her and would not spare her.

The revelation would follow. Beyond the half-open door was the associate of the past who knew her well, and who would be the witness against her. Her foreboding heart beat the knell of her happy life at the forest mission.

"Judith!" called Father Caleb, in mild accents, "we wait for you!"

She stirred into action. Delay was but folly, for the revelation might as well come at once. She walked forward to the door, pushed it wholly open, and entered the room.

The new assistant missionary was there.

CHAPTER III.

"MR. LEE," spoke Father Caleb, "this is Judith. She is the pale dove of our cote, and the beloved of all of us."

Never was introduction more kindly, but Judith did not look at either the speaker or the new assistant. Her gaze was downcast. She was conscious that some one crossed the floor and stood before her, and then she heard a deep, rich voice.

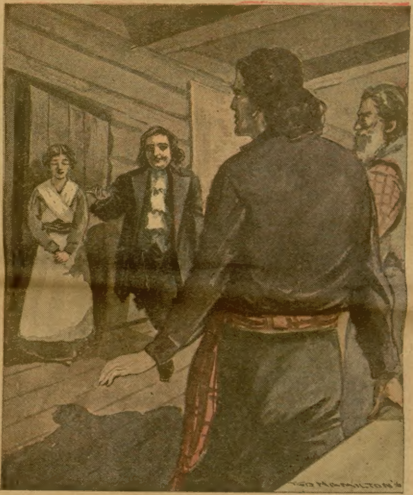
"I am pleased to meet Miss Judith, and trust our acquaintance will always be friendly. More, I trust that my works will have the commendation, not alone of our good Father Caleb, but one so highly regarded as this young lady."

Judith started. Her mind was clear, her senses acute, and she weighed each trifle with nicety, but with that voice had come a surprise so profound that she forgot all else. She raised her eyes. The new assistant stood before her, but—it was not Jacob Lee!

Mechanically she answered, and then Father Caleb saved her from longer being the central figure of the group by speaking further. Free to go to a seat, she went gladly, confused and dumfounded.

The new assistant remained standing, a notable figure. Six feet tall and of admirable proportions, his shoulders were of great breadth, his arms pillars of muscle, and his whole frame in due similitude. Thick masses of dark hair crowned his well-poised head, and his shapely, firm, large-eyed face was that of a man of mental power.

All this Judith saw, yet—Jacob Lee had been a slight, fair-haired, undersized man whose delicate frame often failed to endure the fatigue of daily labor.



"Mr. Lee," spoke Father Caleb, "this is Judith."

Father Caleb, wholly unsuspicious, added other words, and the new assistant went to a seat with a firm tread which, somehow, was calculated to remind one of the step of the elastic-muscled panther.

Breakfast was soon announced and eaten, and then the missionary himself conducted the newcomer to his private room. There Jacob Lee was left alone. His luggage lay on the floor where a servant had placed it, but he made no haste to unpack. Instead, he stood erect and stared into space with his face devoid of missionary expression. He revolved something in his mind.

"The young woman looked at me strangely," he thought. "She was surprised—nearly speechless. Why? Where have I seen her before? She knows me, or recalls my face vaguely. Detection has met me at the door!"

He began walking the floor. A dozen times he went back and forth, and then chanced to observe his luggage.

"No need of untying a string!" he muttered. "Within ten minutes I shall be called downstairs and informed that my room is better than my company. What evil luck!"

He resumed his pacing, his brows contracted, his face somber, stern and dissatisfied. Had Father Caleb seen him then he would have thought that a strange helper had come to aid him in deeds of good.

After a while the restless movements ceased. He unpacked his few belongings and arranged them about the room. When all was done he went below. Father Caleb met him there, wholly unruffled, his smile as genial as of old, his manner mild and kindly. It was a surprise for the man who called himself Jacob Lee, but, quick to accept a situation, he met every advance with friendly interest and earnest attention. And so the new missionary came to Father Caleb's Eden.

It was a busy place by day. The school usually occupied the attention of Judith Ashwood and the second teacher, Martha Otis, but, with the hospital tenanted and necessity for constant attendance there, the daily routine was disarranged. The sick had first claim at the mission. Father Caleb, however, was now at leisure, and preliminary knowledge of affairs was given to Jacob Lee by means of a tour with his superior. He saw the Indians, old and young, strong and weak, and learned what was being done for their bodies, minds, and souls, and he seemed to take deep interest in everything.

As they stood a short distance from the buildings, with the river rolling heavily just beyond, his roving gaze fell anew upon the white flag which moved listlessly in the uncertain breeze.

"Your emblem is of appropriate color," he said approvingly.

"Yes, white, the color of purity and good will," replied Father Caleb, his face lighting up suddenly. "It is my wife's idea, and Mary Jane makes no mistakes. Just the color for a hospital."

"An excellent choice by a noble woman. This reminds me, you haven't shown me thru the hospital yet."

"No, and it can't be done just now. I told you about the sick young woman. Well, she is flighty-headed, and we don't venture even to look in needlessly, lest she is made worse by the intrusion."

"A wise precaution. Did you previously say she was an Indian girl?"

"Dear me, now I think of it, I don't believe I explained about her in detail. You shall hear."

He told the story of the wilderness waif with deep feeling, his speech clear and vivid. Jacob, standing passive, listened without interruption, but clearly losing no word.

"A singular event," he remarked, at the close.

"It is the sadness of it I think about most."

"Naturally," agreed the new assistant. "A terrible experience she has had. Poor child! You say she is quite young?"

"Under 25, no doubt."

"And refined?"

"Yes. A rosebud of a girl when well."

"I suppose that means, dark-complexioned?"

"In a way, yes, tho not swarthy. Merely black-haired."

"And you have no idea who she is?" persisted Jacob, who seemed to be greatly interested.

"Not the least."

"She must mutter in her delirium. Does she speak no names?"

"Not one. If she did we might build upon it, but we hope she will soon be wholly coherent. It's amazing how she happened to be in the heart of the wilderness, far from human habitation and friends."

Jacob agreed, asked other questions along the same line, and then deftly changed the subject, leading Father Caleb to speak further of the Indians. His attention was again close and gratifying. Talking, he stole quick looks at the hospital building, but a half-curtain obstructed his view.

When he and Judith met at the dinner hour his forebodings were added to but not illumined by anything new. He noticed her peculiar manner, her occasional secret scrutiny of his face, her perplexity and irresolution, but she uttered no disquieting word.

On his own part, he trod with firm step on what he believed was precarious footing, feeling his way in the maze. Without avoiding her he took pains not to feed the fire of her suspicion, and then awaited developments with composure.

It was mid-afternoon when, leaving the house, he encountered Ben Reed. The latter had disappeared some hours before, but, grim of face, was now walking before the hospital in the old way, rifle on arm. His warlike manner seemed to interest, rather than repel Jacob, who halted.

"Friend Reed," he said, "I have missed you of late. They tell me you are a hunter. Perhaps you have been taking a turn in the forest?"

"I have," Ben replied quietly, "but I'm now back."

He glanced at the hospital and fell to drumming on his rifle-barrel.

"I suppose it's pleasing to get to a civilized spot, now and then?"

"In a measure, yes. The woods are my home, and I'm usually a home body, but I'm not there now. I want to be here a while."

Jacob was a reader of men, and he saw something further of interest in Ben and his manner.

"Very likely you want to be near the girl you brought in from the wilderness?"

"No! I want to be near the man who lured her there."

"Ah!"

There was brief silence. Jacob marked the grim tone, the restless play of the fingers on the rifle, the glitter of the hunter's eyes, and the stubborn planting of the moccasined feet, and understood perfectly. It seemed that, as a missionary, he ought to expostulate with a man who harbored violent feelings, but he did nothing of the kind. After talking a few minutes longer he moved away.

Ben watched him go with interest. Knowing that the older Indians had already named him Strong Jacob, their choice was so appropriate that he commended it with a quick nod. Jacob was physical power personified.

Later, night closed in on the mission. Its inmates were given to early retiring, and gradually the buildings, with the exception of the hospital, became dark. Jacob Lee was among the first to extinguish his private light, but the following darkness found him fully dressed. He sat by his window and looked out, his mind busy and his senses alert.

Two hours passed. He rose and softly opened the door. Darkness and complete silence were there. After several minutes he turned back into the room, replaced his shoes with moccasins, and thus shod with noiseless stuff, went lightly into the hall. Dark as the place was he was not at fault, and kept on with movements almost as silent as the swaying of a shadow.

He found the stairs, descended step by step, and reached the lower floor with the quietude unbroken. He had thought of all possibilities and now went to a window and looked out. It was at that point Ben Reed so tenaciously held his vigil, but even Ben had to sleep sometimes. The square was not then pressed by his feet, and the place was deserted. This was as the assistant missionary would have it, and he breathed a sigh of relief.

Opening the main door he passed out, turned to the left, went several yards, and again paused. He was at the door of the hospital.

With his massive figure motionless, he listened intently. There was no sound nearer than the outlying forest. Putting his hand into the pocket of his coat he touched a pistol.

Then he laid hold of the door-latch, pressed the thumb-piece slowly and carefully, and placed the frail obstacle ajar. With unabated caution he enlarged the opening until he had view of the lighted interior.

Martha Otis dozed in a chair, while on the bed lay the waif of the wilderness.

CHAPTER IV.

MARK BALLARD lay under a red cedar on the bank of the Columbia. He had been a free trapper, a voyageur, a hunter, and a guide in the wild Northland and from choice, not of necessity, drawn by the magnetism of the wilderness. The mountain, the prairie, the lake and the stream, the darkened course under the fir-tree and the oak, the somber defiles of the high ranges—all these he had known as brothers, and to him the wildest spots were home.

Shortly after noon of the day following the events last described, he had left the mission for a ramble, dividing his attention between the sympathetic embrace of the forest and a mental problem.

Judith or the wilderness?—the free life of the wilds, or the restraints of so-called civilization, plus Judith. Which? Decision was difficult, for he did not know either her mind or his own, but to be much longer in her company was to lose his power of will.

Two trails were in his mind, two magnets drew him. The woods or Judith? Which was he to choose?

He had considered as he walked, and after he sat down under the cedar, but the longer he studied the less certain he was. Yet, he knew that if he lingered at the mission he would have no choice. Modest and retiring as the girl was, her personality would make him forget the charm of the wilderness.

Judith or the woods? Which to choose, which to seek now, which——

His thoughts were interrupted, and he lifted his head suddenly and gazed up the river. Music was in the air, the song of men who used their voices in chorus, and he was not at a loss to know what it meant. He had heard like songs before. In the long sweeps of the rivers, on the traverses of the lakes, in the rapids and by the toilsome portages, he had been with men who sang thus at their work, and the life of the voyageur was as familiar to him as if he had been born to the canoe and paddle.

Louder rose the chanson and nearer came the singers, and presently into the farthest reach of his vision shot forth the water travelers.

Eight men were at the oars, with the usual steersman. The eight were swarthy, long-haired, lithe fellows, plainly of mixed French and Indian extraction, and picturesque in their striped shirts, open at the breast, with gaudy handkerchief at neck, scarlet sash at waist, and headgear of many colors; but he who steered was soberly clad in fringed buckskin and of a different type, with fairer hair and skin.

Steadily the oars rose and fell, and as the craft leaped forward the chanson of the occupants swept into the forest musically. Mark Ballard thrilled momentarily. If there was little to admire in the class of men, the charm of the life they led was great, and it appealed to him powerfully.

Himself unseen, he was about to make his voice heard when something checked him abruptly.

"Captain Gregory!" muttered the rover.

He had seen the steersman before, and knew him for one active in the fur-trade, but far from the Columbia. What had transferred him was not then to be known, nor did he care to ask. Donald Gregory had been well thought of by some as captain of a boat-brigade, but others distrusted his character, and in their slight acquaintance Mark had never taken to him.

Now, seeing Gregory, he was willing to let the boat pass by, so he lay quiet and remained unseen. Long after the wake of the boat dwindled away the song drifted back, and then came silence. Mark again fell into thought, remained until the shadows lengthened, but finally started on his homeward journey.

Night had fallen when he reached the mission clearing, but all was not dark there. An unusual ruddy glow was in the glade, and men were grouped around an outdoor fire. As he had expected, the voyageurs were at halt. He went directly to the fire.

The eight oarsmen were there, extract of France, alloyed by blood of Cree and Assiniboine, and notable fellows in their way. All were strangers to Mark, but he went forward and greeted them at once, and was soon informed of certain facts by their amiable and voluble talk.

They were from a fur-trading post well up the river, but bound to the coast in order that Gregory might transact business there. With this business the voyageurs had no concern except to row him down, and they were as carefree as the owl that hooted in the woods.

Captain Gregory was being entertained by Father Caleb, making the most of his night's stay, but later Ballard saw him briefly. Neither revived their slight former acquaintance with warmth, and the hunter was glad to retire early.

Toward morning he saw the voyageurs depart, and tho they started in silence, their songs were soon borne back in the usual way.

Mark was the first of the household party to be astir, later, and he was moving to have a word with the cook when he found another person near to where Thomas labored, a full-blooded white man he had never seen before. He was walking slowly away, and when his retreat was more complete Ballard accosted the busy worker.

"Who is the man yonder?"

"Meanin' the red-head?" asked Thomas curtly. "Well, he says his mother named him Sandy Murch, and don't kick, so I won't, but it's a heathen name. Fits him, tho."

"Where did he come from?"

"With Gregory and them half-breeds, in their boat. He's one o' Gregory's lambs."

Mark was surprised. He had plainly seen the boat when it passed by where he sat under the cedar, and no such man had been there. More than that, he had counted the voyageurs, and knew this fellow was an overflow.

The rover looked hard after the stranger. He was a short, very broad-shouldered man, with uncombed red hair and beard. He was an abiding-place for bunches and knobs. His bones, like his hair, stuck out eccentrically, and so did his nose, ears, and cheeks. Even his garments followed suit. A gnarled human tree was this newcomer.

"Did you," Ballard added, "coax him to stay here?"

"If you think that you need a doctor for your eyes!" growled the cook. "That critter stayed thru no coaxin' of mine. He had a pain, last night, Sandy did—or said he had one. Jacob Lee was powerful tender of him, and suggested that he stay and get over it. Captain Gregory got tender, too—bah!—rubbish!—and he got leave from Father Caleb for him to stay. Said he would pick him up on his return. Brrr! I'd like to pick him up, myself, and—but this is a mission house. Got a pain into him, has he? Brrr! Ever hear of a voyageur givin' in to a pain? Mebbe so, but ever hear of a captain humorin' him about it? Never, by gosh!"

"You don't like him?"

"You guessed it!"

"Doesn't he behave himself?"

"When with me, he does, and don't you doubt it. He's got to! As for likin' him, not any! He's been quartered on me, which jars my narves. Then he's got the pryingest eyes I ever see. Sees too much to be safe. Meddlesome, I mean. I'd like to put him in a bag and drowned him in the river—but this is a missionary house. Look at him now! Come to a halt and eyin' things here always. Pryin' skunk!"

A wave of suspicion rolled over the hunter, but more because he disliked Sandy's looks than anything else. Odd as it was that Gregory had taken him into the boat when near the mission and far from the captain's regular field, that was possibly nothing, but Thomas stood well with the rover and his opinion was impressive.

Sandy remained close by the mission, that day, sometimes lamenting when his pain gripped him, if it really did, and drinking Father Caleb's medicines with faithful readiness, but whether with or without pain his eyes were always busy.

In the evening of that day a fire again burned in the glade. The Indian pupils, delighted with the blaze made by the voyageurs, had received permission to keep the fire alight, and after supper all, white and red, old and young, made part of the diversified group, and all were outwardly friendly and sociable.

On the surface tranquillity reigned, and again Father Caleb made the remark that Eden Mission was wholly free from secrets, selfish thoughts, and lawless passions, with no visible signs to contradict him.

Jacob Lee was with the others. He had found his new home pleasant, and had gained the good will of the missionary and many others. He was, however, uncertain of his standing with Judith.

She had spoken no word to disquiet him, but he knew he was constantly under investigation, suspicion, or something more pronounced. Sagacious as he was, he could not tell more. More than once he entered into conversation with her—tho she seemed anxious to avoid this—and gave her every chance to explain herself, but no explanations came.

He did not suspect that Judith was herself perplexed by the situation, and in a state of nervous dread. She could not understand who the new assistant was, nor why he was there, but knew that if his name was really Jacob Lee he was not the Jacob Lee who had been sent for and expected at the mission.

Thus, the two lived in darkness and worry, wrapped in mystery and danger, and neither knew the mind of the other. Meanwhile, they attended to their respective duties, and nobody else had inkling of the strange situation.

Jacob often wished matters had been different, and never more than that evening by the fire. He gave heed to others as all stood or sat in the firelight, but it was Judith who secretly had most of his attention. Her beauty and grace impressed him, charmed him in spite of his fears, and when she finally moved away toward her room he looked after her almost longingly. Fear and friendship, repulsion and attraction—singular mental companions—secretly went out from him to her.

Mark Ballard was early astir in the morning, and was standing in front of the main building when he chanced to observe something peculiar at his feet. He was still looking when Ben Reed joined him and used his own eyes. Then he grunted oddly.

"Queer!" he commented.

"What," asked Mark, "do you make of it?"

"A pool of blood; I've brought no game here, and don't think you or anybody else has. The Indians wouldn't bring game at night, anyhow."

"There are deeply imprinted footsteps and signs of a hard struggle. It was no tame affair. Doubtless well matched, they fought bitterly, and at least one was hurt. What will Father Caleb say?"

"We must look into this before he knows any part on't, for his sake. Come, Ballard!"

For some time they were busy, going up and down the river, and then the younger man spoke briefly.

"Sum it all up, Ben."

"Indians have been in the glade, four or five of them. They carried the wounded man off, a little blood dripping as they went. They came in a canoe, at the beginning and first touched the bank several rods away, up yonder. One man, and, I think, only one, landed. He went right to the glade. Later, the canoe was shifted to another landing-place and several men stepped out and went there, too, got their comrade, and carried him to the craft. Then they doubtless paddled away."

"You read the signs as I do. All hands toed in, which marks them as Indians in the total. Both men who fought wore moccasins, but I am not sure that both were redskins. Are you?"

"No, but I won't pronounce judgment on them tracks made in the fight. They are only prods into the earth. One fighter may possibly have been white. Anyhow, Ballard, something mighty dubisome has been done here."

"I hope it was not murder, for it would be a terrible shock to good Father Caleb. We must tell him what we have seen. I'll call him at once."

The missionary was found and brought. When the story was told he was, at first, shocked and startled, but optimism soon pushed worry aside. Faith in the analytical powers of two skillful trailers was less strong than belief that nothing evil could happen at the mission, and he smiled and grew cheerful.

"Doubtless some friendly Indian left game here for us to eat."

"Do they usually do this at night?"

"Well, no, but they might, you know."

"Has game been brought to Thomas by anybody?"

"I will ask, at once. Meanwhile, let us erase all signs of this red mark—that's right, Benjamin, scoop the dirt carefully over it. One of our ladies might be needlessly worried at sight of it."

Father Caleb went to the cook, while Ben secured a bucket of water and added to his efforts judiciously. Having finished he returned the utensil to its place and was back with Ballard before the missionary returned. He nodded jerkily and spoke in guarded tones.

"I've seen something. While I was doing bucket duty Sandy Murch was peekin' at us from yonder winder."

"He should be seen to," Ballard commented.

"He has been. The last time I passed his room I took a look in."

"Well?"

"Sandy was sound asleep. Didn't hear when I spoke. Drops off into sleep sudden—eh?"

Mark frowned and considered the point seriously.

"I never took to that scrubby Scotchman, thinkin' that mischief stuck out o' him like quills on a porcupine, and now I like him less than ever," Ben added. "Laid up with a little pain, is he? Gammon! Also, do you remember it was Jacob Lee first suggested that Sandy stay here?"

The bordermen looked at each other understandingly, but the return of Father Caleb interrupted the talk.

"No food has been brought in," he said, "but game may have been rested there briefly as its slayer passed by. No doubt that was it."

"I wouldn't rely too much on that theory!" replied Ben dryly.

Next week's Ledger will contain further chapters of this remarkable story. You will miss a great deal if you do not read it to the end. We will give you constantly the very best stories of entertainment that money will buy, so send in your subscriptions and take the Ledger regularly, if you are not doing so. You will not regret it.

* * *

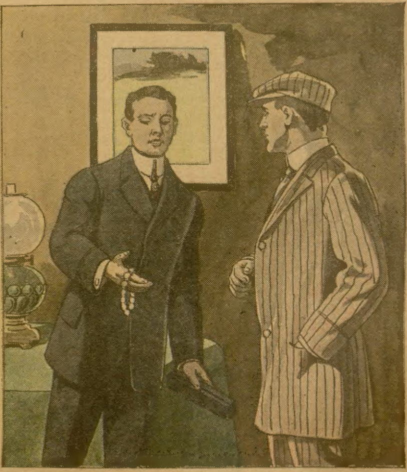
His Idea.

Mother—"I'd have been ashamed to behave like you do when I was your age."

Kid—"You never was my age; you was always older'n me. You was borned first."

At Barclay House

Or, A Detective Puzzle - By Will Lisenbee



"Diamonds? I should say they are."

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CHAPTER V.

SHORTLY after six J. Frank Hartman arrived and was conducted into Mark Sheldon's room. The station agent seated himself in the easy chair, and took a cigar from the box pushed toward him by Mark.

"I believe I have hit on a clew," he said. "Of course, I'm an amateur at the business, and I may be a thousand miles off the track, but I'll let you decide, for I want to get in the game with some one who knows."

"I understand," said Mark. "But I can't promise you that you'll profit by my teachings. There are times when pure luck helps a detective more than all his wisdom."

"But luck isn't going to help a man who is blind to a clew which luck may have placed under his nose," declared Hartman. "That is the way I look at it, and I work on that line. You have looked over things a little, I suppose? Have inspected the room where the murder was committed, and had a look at the dead man's effects?"

"Yes, and I suppose you did the same?"

"I didn't have much time to look things over in the way I should have liked to do, but ran onto something that looks like a clew. You examined the doors and windows of the room?"

"Yes."

"Did you happen to notice that the windows were down and fastened with spring catches? Well, the windows hadn't been touched, and everything had been left just as it was when the body was found. Now, I have a theory that the person who did the deed came in and went out thru one of the windows." He paused to light his cigar while Mark waited in silence for him to go on. "On one of the window-sills I discovered the mark of a shoe, which I traced by the marks of the tacks in the heel and a color of reddish-cast made by a bit of clay. Now, that clay wasn't wholly dry, which fixes the time of it having been rubbed there as not earlier than twenty-four hours before. You noticed that yourself?"

"Yes," said Mark. "I am glad you also noticed it. What else in connection with the footprint did you discover?"

"I saw the prints on the veranda, and by making a pretty close inspection, I got an almost perfect outline of the shoe that left the impression."

"Ah! By George! Then you have beaten me!" cried Mark. "I could get an outline to show something of the shape of the shoe, but too imperfect for practical use in identification. But go on."

"Well, I took the measurements of the print; in fact, I made a drawing of it which is correct in its measurements in every particular. And listen, Mr. Sheldon: The tracks we saw on the window-sill and on the veranda and in the room where the murder was committed, were made by—a woman's shoe!"

In spite of his habitual coolness, Mark uttered a quick gasp.

"Good heavens!" he cried. "Can it be possible?"

"There can be no doubt of it." There was a look of pleasure on Hartman's face. "I am mighty glad, Mr. Sheldon, that you, an experienced detective, should be interested in what little progress I have made. It is the only chance I ever had to work on a real mystery case at close range, and it is the first time I have ever had the chance to get into the game with a real detective. I'm sure glad of the chance, and if I can help you the least bit, I'll sure be glad to do it."

"I am certainly glad to have your help," said Mark, "but I am by no means sure that I shouldn't turn about and help you instead of your helping me."

Hartman flushed with pleasure. "I know it's mighty nice of you to say that," he said, "but I'm going to work under your orders if you find my work worth while. But I haven't finished with my story yet. As I said, it was a woman's track that marked the window-sill, the veranda, and the carpet in the murdered man's room. Where the heel of the shoe had scraped across the sill were, as I said, certain marks that might have been made by the heads of the tacks in the heel, and then on the other hand those little marks which appeared to be scratches in the red clay, might have been the impression made by a corrugated rubber heel. But it was a woman's shoe, all right, and when we put our hands on the guilty party, there will be a woman not far away."

Mark Sheldon listened to the words in a dazed sort of way. For a little time not a word was spoken. Mark was grappling with the tangled skeins of the mystery. He was thinking of the ring with the broken hearts, the footprints on the window-sill, and the little corrugations on the heel of a shoe he had seen on the foot of Katharine Turk but a few hours before. The whole thing seemed like a nightmare. What malignant jugglery had got into the game to connect the girl with the hideous crime? No one could look into the wonderful deep gray eyes with their tender and sympathetic light and not read therein an absolute refutation of the hideous accusation that, like a menacing finger, pointed darkly to Katharine Turk! These were the thoughts that rushed swiftly into Mark Sheldon's brain, and yet he could not thrust aside the dark web of mystery that blurred his mental vision.

"And yet," Hartman was going on, "all this proves nothing absolutely. We may find the print of the shoe, and even the shoe, and possibly the person who wore it, but even that leaves a thousand avenues by which we may have gone astray. Let us eliminate all this for the present, and take a new start. A little clew must not be allowed to blind our eyes to everything else. We will start out on a new trail, and if this leads us up to the shoe prints again, then we shall begin to respect the shoe prints and give them their proper place in the natural sequence of things to be considered. But for the present, let us dispense with all this and turn our gaze in another direction. You are not acquainted with this region, and many things may have happened here which are unknown to you and even to the gentlemen who sat on the coroner's jury.

"It was on the twelfth day of October that Basil Smoot came to Barclay House. He came on 112, at 3:54. He stood on the platform for a minute or so, waiting for the hack that had not yet arrived from Barclay House. He asked me three questions. Was there probably any virtue in the mineral springs at Barclay House? Was hunting good in this region? Had I noticed if a man and two women had left the train at my station within the last day or two? I knew that the first two questions were asked without desire for any information on the subjects, and that the third question was the vital one. But I gave answers to all, assuring him that no party of a man and two women had left the train there within a fortnight.

"But I thought nothing of this till after I had learned of the man's murder this morning. Then I made some inquiries, and learned that a man and two women had left No. 112 at the Iron Mountain crossing, a mile and a half north of Dogwood, on the day before Smoot's arrival.

"The man was well-dressed, about 40 years old, and the two women much younger, the elder being about 30, and her companion 18 or 20. The women were smartly dressed, wore diamonds, and were evidently well-to-do people. The party carried three suitcases, and when we take into consideration all the facts, it seems a bit strange that they should have left the train at the railroad crossing, in a lonely place, with their baggage to carry, and not a soul nor a vehicle of any kind within miles of them. They were last seen following a little path into the hills. Where were they going? Who were they? Why did they get off at the Iron Mountain railroad crossing and then take to the hills? Smoot had asked about a man and two women, and Smoot was murdered a few hours later.

"Of course, after I had learned about the party that left the train at Iron Mountain crossing and thought I saw some connection between them and Basil Smoot, I made further inquiries, but could learn nothing. Then I sent a fellow to take the trail and see if he could find out what had become of the man and the two women that accompanied him.

"The fellow I sent on the errand is a rather odd, but by no means stupid, hill billy—Jap Neff by name—who lives in a cabin across the ridge a mile or so north of here. His occupation is confined to cultivating a few acres of ground thru the summer and hunting and trapping during the fall and winter months.

"Jap lives alone in his little cabin with his faithful squirrel dog Binks, and having no human companion to keep him company, he sometimes drops around and chats with me at the station.

"I explained what I wanted him to do—to try to get a line on these swells that hopped from the train and took to the hills, but gave him no specific reason for wanting the information, for he was quite content with the coins I had given him to jingle in his pocket.

"Jap is a shrewd sort of fellow, and one of the sort who might go prowling about anywhere with his squirrel rifle without creating notice.

"Well, Jap took his squirrel rifle and struck out across the hills, saying he'd find out something about the parties before he came back. Just before I left the station to come up here he returned.

"'I found the place where they have been roostin',' he says, 'but they ain't there any more. Somethin' must 'a' shooed 'em away.'

"That was about what I suspected," went on Hartman. "But maybe we'll get a line on the bunch yet."

CHAPTER VI.

AND where had the three been staying?" asked Mark. "At some farmhouse?"

"No; they were quartered, it seems, at what is known as the Oaks, which was originally intended for a sanatorium—a sort of health resort, put up in competition to Barclay House, but it was a dismal failure. The owners, who lived in St. Louis, abandoned it as a profitable enterprise some years ago, and since that time it has been occupied by old Zeb Kaylor and his wife, who occupy it rent free, acting as caretakers, and cultivating a small tract of land adjoining the place.

"The house is fairly well furnished, and while it is not open to the public, Kaylor and his wife sometimes take in hunters or fishermen who happen to be in that locality and desire lodging.

"So it is not strange that the mysterious trio should have stopped there. But as they were not hunters or fishermen, what was it that brought them thither? Jap tried to find out, but if old Kaylor knew, he kept it to himself. He didn't even know their names or where they went after leaving, but it was quite like him to say that, whether he knew or not.

"Now, the question is, what brought the three to the Oaks, and why should they have disappeared just at this time? Maybe there is not the slightest connection on earth between their presence and the deed committed at Barclay House, but it strikes me that it might pay to find out. What do you think?"

"I quite agree with you," said Mark. "We must learn more of those people, and try to dig up the secret of their visit and their sudden disappearance."

"I was just thinking," went on Hartman, "that if you could manage to drop round to the Oaks and have a talk with old Kaylor, you might induce him to open up and give you some information. If there is any scouting to be done, Jap will do that, and will be discreet. I'll see you again, and if anything worth while occurs, I'll call you over the 'phone, or come up."

The next morning the body of Basil Smoot was taken to the morgue at Mountain Springs, the county seat, where it was to be held for a time to await the possible arrival of some one to claim it. The next day, however, a brother of the murdered man arrived from St. Louis and took the body back with him.

He was very reticent, and declined to make any statement regarding his deceased brother's affairs, but made careful inquiries respecting the murder that had been committed, and said he would look into the affair later. He was Smoot's only living relative, it appeared, and brought a letter from the District Attorney of St. Louis. He stated before leaving that he would arrange to offer a reward for the murderer, and would return in the course of the week.

During the next few days that followed there were no new developments in the case. Mark Sheldon paid a visit to the Oaks in the guise of a hunter, and made the acquaintance of Zeb Kaylor, who, as Mark soon learned, had a passion for the game of chess. Mark was a skillful player, as was Kaylor, and after a hard battle of two hours in which Mark only saved himself from defeat by forcing a draw by a perpetual check, Kaylor put out his hand to the visitor in a warm clasp.

"You're the first chap that's hit the hills in a coon's age that could chase me into a corner like that!" he cried. "By Jenks! I want you to drop round this way often. The way you worked your pawn and bishop in the corner would have done credit to Pillsbury!"

So, as it happened, chess was the key that unlocked the reserve of Zeb Kaylor and also the doors of the Oaks to Mark Sheldon. It was not till some days later that Mark ventured to touch the subject of the mysterious three—the man and the two women who had stopped at the Oaks for a brief period only to disappear as mysteriously as they had come.

He asked no questions at the start, but drew up to the subject with that delicate diplomacy which the detective soon learns to employ when in search of information. Mark had turned the conversation to the subject of people who came from the city to fish and hunt in that region.

"Some of them are great swells, I suppose?" he ventured.

Kaylor nodded. "They air jist that," he said. "But they can't he'p their ways, I reckon. They rile a feller now an' then, but it's 'cause we don't understand 'em, I take it. Some of the biggest swells air real folks when you git next ter 'em. About the worst case of a would-be swell that ever hit these hills was T. Jefferson Blythe, who, as I afterwards learned, was not a millionaire, but a clerk of some sort from St. Joe, who was down here fer an outing. You'd 'a' thought he'd bin raised in the Astor House, the way he turned up his nose at things. But I've l'arned to spot the likes of him. Thar's a mighty big difference in his brand of a swell an' the one that blew in here a few days ago, with a couple of ladies with him—I say ladies, fer they was ladies plumb thru and thru. Bless you, when they comes a-hikin' in here carryin' their grips, you'd 'a' thought they had jist stepped out of a bandbox. But shucks! they was pure white—every one. They wanted ter camp here a bit, they said, till they looked inter a little business matter, an' Berkley—Dennis Berkley—that was the man's name, he skinned a twenty off his roll and passed it to me, along with some big black cigars, an' we went out on the porch an' smoked, while the women who had come with him, learnin' that my wife Mandy was ailin', put on some big aprons an' went in ter the kitchen ter help her git supper. They was shore nice folks, an' while I wasn't jist prepared fer guests as I'd 'a' liked to bin, I hated ter see 'em go away. But they'll be back, they sed."

"Did they return to the city?" asked Mark.

"No; they went over ter the Black Holler mine, about a mile or so from here. Berkley and the women, it seems, have some sort of an interest in the old mine, an' I guess they are thinkin' of openin' up a'gin."

"What sort of a mine is it?" Mark asked.

"An old lead and zinc mine. It hain't bin worked fer a long while. It belongs ter the Black Holler Mining Company, an' there was some sort of trouble about the title or somethin' of that sort, an' they got inter law over it, an' after the tunnel they was runnin' under the hill caved in, work was stopped. That was about three years ago."

"And those people are still over there?"

"I reckon they are."

"Are there any buildings at the mine?"

"Oh, yes; thar's quite a good house that was put up fer the superintendent, an' office buildin', an' a small blacksmith shop. I guess they are sort of campin' thar fer the present. Jim Soper, a squatter livin' in the next holler north, tuck his wagon an' hauled some grub over ter the mine an' brought 'em a cook, so I guess they'll stay a while."

All this was very interesting to Mark, and he learned from a further talk with Kaylor that the women who accompanied Berkley were Mrs. Badger, probably a relative, and Miss Vera Berkley, Dennis Berkley's sister.

So far there did not seem to be anything in the presence of Berkley and the women in that region to connect them in any way with the Smoot affair. Still, there remained the fact that Smoot had made inquiries regarding a man and two women whom he appeared to have expected to arrive at Dogwood on the very day that Berkley and the two women had got off the train at the railroad crossing a mile north of the town.

Mark ran the matter over in his mind, and he was resolved to know more about the three who were staying at the Black Hollow mine.

It was near sunset when he reached Barclay House, and he had just eaten his supper and started to his room when J. Frank Hartman arrived. There was an expression on the station agent's face that told him that something had happened to bring him to Barclay House.

"Just come up to my room and tell me all about it," smiled Mark.

Hartman grinned as he followed Mark up the stairs. "I can't say that I have hit on anything that will help us get on the trail of the murderer," he said, when they were seated in Mark's room, "but it's a funny sort of business, and has to do with Smoot, which makes it interesting right at this time. But before I tell my story I want you to read this and tell me what you know about it." He handed a newspaper clipping to Mark, who took it and read:

> "Mrs. Lois Pemberton, whose diamond necklace, valued at $20,000, was stolen from her room at the Vendome Hotel last Wednesday night, left for her home in Chicago this morning. She felt a keen disappointment at the failure of the police to recover the stolen property, and has put detectives to work on the case. She offers $1,000 reward for the return of the necklace."

"The clipping is from a St. Louis paper," said Hartman, "and the robbery occurred in that city. Do you happen to know anything about Mrs. Pemberton?"

"Why, she's the widow of the late Harold Pemberton, who was the head of a big department store in Chicago. That is about all I know about her, excepting that she is very rich and spends a lot of money on charity and traveling about the world."

"Then it isn't likely that the diamond necklace business was all a fake?"

"Oh, no; it is not at all likely that Mrs. Pemberton would stoop to any shoddy business like that."

"And if a fellow should happen to put hands on the lost necklace he'd get the reward?"

"No doubt."

"Now if there is anything on earth that I know nothing about, it's diamonds," said Hartman. "I wouldn't know a diamond necklace from one of the crudest imitation. Are you a judge of diamonds?"

"Not the best in the world," said Mark, "but I fancy I should be pretty hard to deceive regarding the genuineness of one."

Hartman drew from his pocket a slim ebony case, and opening it, laid it in Mark's hand. Lying in the case was a necklace of old Roman gold, set with jewels which seemed all aglow with imprisoned light, scintillating with points of white and bluish flame.

Mark uttered a gasp of amazement. "Good heavens!" he cried, "where did you get this?"

"Are those diamonds?" Hartman asked.

"Diamonds?" echoed Mark. "I should say they are!"

Hartman's eyes were radiant.

"You are sure?" he asked breathlessly.

"Just as sure as I am that the light there is burning," he replied.

"Then this must be the necklace stolen from Mrs. Pemberton at the Vendome Hotel in St. Louis."

Mark Sheldon was examining the necklace under a magnifying glass which he took from his pocket, and for a moment he said nothing.

"By George!" he cried, "you have got the real thing in this, whoever it may belong to. Of course, I cannot say that it is the one lost by Mrs. Pemberton, but it is a diamond necklace all the same, worth, I should say, every cent of the twenty thousand dollars which the Pemberton necklace is valued at. Say, my boy, you have surely got me guessing. I'm ready now to hear your story."

CHAPTER VII.

"BEFORE I explain how this necklace came into my possession," Hartman began, "I shall have to tell you of my adventure of last night, which first put me on the trail of it.

"I close the office at six usually, and I do not come back after supper. But last night I came back about seven to look for a missing freight bill which had been mislaid about the office. I had found the bill, and had just put out the light and started to leave the office and go home, when I heard a dash of rain against the window-panes.

"I didn't care to go out in the rain, and I just seated myself in a chair, lit a cigar, and thought I'd wait till the shower was over. But the rain continued, and sitting there in the darkness and silence, I soon fell asleep.

"When I awoke it was about ten o'clock. I was about to light a match to look at my watch, when I heard footsteps on the platform outside. I sat still, holding the unlighted match in my hand.

"I could still hear the rain falling, and as the waiting-room was left unlocked for the use of those who might come to take the midnight train, I thought nothing of it. The steps passed the office, and presently I heard them in the waiting-room. I keep a big kerosene lamp in there, as we have no electric lights in Dogwood, and this was burning dimly.

"The fellow, whoever he was, passed close to the side of the wall opposite the one against which I was sitting, and I caught a glimpse of the shadow of his slouch hat on the ticket office window as he passed. He must have taken a seat on one of the benches, for I did not hear him for a little time.

"Presently I heard a quick step on

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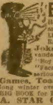

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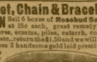

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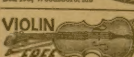

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the platform, and some one passed swiftly by the door and entered the waiting-room.

"'Good Lord! is that you, Dave?' I heard the man in the waiting-room say as the other entered.

"'Yes, it is surely I and no one else,' replied the newcomer, 'and I'm mighty glad to get in out of the rain!'

"'How do you happen to be here at this time? I thought you were to come back on the midnight train.'

"'Oh, I took another route,' was the reply, 'and I hopped off at the crossing a mile from here and hoofed it the rest of the way.'

"'Well, I'm glad you're here, old hoss, for we have got some work before us, tho I don't see that we can accomplish much.'

"'We can't get out in this rain. We'd be drenched to the skin.'

"'Sure! We had better wait here till the rain slackens. It may not be for long. What luck did you have in getting rid of the—baggage?'

"'That was easy. I just slipped off at a small station, and forgot to get back on the train. Say, it is not the most pleasant job in the world to be a brother to such luggage as that. And to be playing the role of brother to such ——' The words trailed off into a coarse laugh.

"They walked over to the wall against which I was sitting, and I heard their backs against the wainscoting as they took a seat on the bench.

"'But you haven't told me what success you had,' said the one called Dave.

"'That is easily told,' replied the other. 'I made a complete water haul!'

"The other one swore under his breath. 'You were up to the Barclay House?' he asked.

"'Sure thing.'

"'And you searched the room occupied by Smoo——'

"His words were cut short by a warning from the other. 'Be careful how you speak names,' he warned, 'and don't speak quite so loud! There may be a dictograph lying in ambush!'

"They both laughed at this. 'As I said,' went on the other, lowering his voice, 'I went up to Barclay House and had a look thru the room. Of course, I told the landlord I was a detective, and showed him the little badge I keep for such purposes, and he went with me and I ransacked the room. I didn't find the necklace, and that is all there is to tell.'

"'Could it be that some one who had access to the room got away with the necklace?' asked the other.

"'Who is to know? I don't think it likely. There is a possibility that the murderer, whoever he was, hit onto the necklace and got away, believing that it would throw the detectives off the trail, as it would be thought robbery was not the motive for the crime.'

"'That looks reasonable, and I believe that is the solution of the mystery. But the question is, who could have done the deed? Could it have been the work of some one who knew about the necklace, and was content to take that and leave the rest?'

"I could not hear all they said, for the roar of the rain made it impossible," went on the station agent, "but I heard quite enough to convince me that the pair were crooks, and that they had in some way been associated with Smoot, or knew something of his affairs, and that the one of them who had been called Dave by his companion had come and claimed the body of Basil Smoot, representing himself to be the deceased's brother. This was done, it appears, for the purpose of getting hold of the diamond necklace. It is a queer mixup, but I think we have a good chance to uncover it all."

"By thunder! it is queer!" cried Sheldon. "Say, Mr. Hartman, you are surely going some. By George! you have struck an important lead!"

"Pure luck and nothing else," protested Hartman. "If it hadn't rained and I hadn't come up to the office about a freight bill, and I hadn't stopped in the office to wait for the rain to cease, and all that sort of thing, I shouldn't have known a thing about the two crooks and the necklace. But to go on with my story: When the rain ceased, which it did shortly after the second man came, the two left the depot. I called up the marshal over the 'phone, but they got away in the darkness, and we saw no more of them. But we may be able to put hands on them yet. But I got to thinking about what I had overheard, and this morning, as soon as I could get away, I came up to see you, but found that you were gone. So I told Quick I'd like to have a look thru the room Smoot had occupied, for it had occurred to me that the necklace might be hidden there, notwithstanding the search that had been made for it by the other fellow.

"I had run the matter over in my mind, and had come to the conclusion that the necklace must be hidden in some place where one would not be likely to look for it. I went into the room, and stood there trying to think of some unlikely place that might have been chosen in which to conceal the necklace—some place where a thief would not be likely to look for plunder. Well, I then began my search, but I didn't find it, and was about to give up the search when my eyes fell on a small flower-pot sitting in the west window. It held a sultana with spreading foliage and full of bloom. I don't know what possessed me to do it, but I bent over it, and parted the flowering branches. And there, slipped in between the flowering branches was the slim ebony case containing the diamond necklace!

"I want to tell you, Mr. Sheldon, that it was a long time before I could believe my eyes. I seized the case, opened it, and stood looking at the dazzling sight that met my gaze like one in a dream. I had already connected this necklace with the one lost by Mrs. Pemberton in the St. Louis hotel, for I had the clipping about it in my pocket at the very time. Yet, when I tried to realize what it all meant—how impossible it all seemed that the Pemberton necklace for which skilled detectives in the city were searching should fall into my hands almost without an effort on my part, I could only stare at it in speechless astonishment. I said nothing to any one, and tho I felt convinced that I had recovered the diamond necklace belonging to Mrs. Pemberton, I decided to await your decision before taking any steps toward restoring it to the owner. That is my story. Now, what is your advice?"

"There is no doubt in my mind that this is Mrs. Pemberton's necklace," said Mark, "but that has not been proved. Until this is done, the necklace should be placed in safe-keeping, and notice sent to Mrs. Pemberton, advising her that a diamond necklace has been found which may prove to be hers. It can then be delivered to her, provided she establishes the proofs of ownership."

"That is what I had in mind. But in the meantime, what disposition should I make of the necklace to insure its safe-keeping? I don't want to have the thing hanging to me to tempt some crook to cut my throat. I thought of taking it to Mr. Quick and asking him to put it in his safe for the present."

"That's a good idea," nodded Mark.

"Then I'll do that. And I have just been thinking that it might be best for you to send a few words to the chief in Chicago, telling him that you think the necklace has been found, and have him notify Mrs. Pemberton. They know you. The woman doesn't know me from Adam, and if I sent her word she might write me down as a fake."

"Your idea is a good one," nodded Mark. "I shall be glad to act for you."

"Then you write out your dispatch, and I'll put it on the wire for you as

(Continued on Page 23.)

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A Chronicle of Perils

By Arthur H. Vesey

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CHAPTER XXII—(Continued).

"THERE is Dr. Starva, as your excellency knows."

"And he is a man of mystery, you tell me. I suppose it not impossible that he has his friends."

"Friends?" he asked, and he gave to the word a strange note of uncertainty.

"Did not one call on him last night, just before I retired?"

"I have understood so."

"And he has come to the chateau as Dr. Starva's own guest?"

"Certainly Dr. Starva's friends have visited him here occasionally."

"The chateau is so immense that one would find it difficult to be sure that one knew the whereabouts of all its rooms."

"If I might take the liberty, I should say that your excellency would be interested in making an inspection of the chateau. The view from the towers is superb."

"And these towers are readily accessible?"

Jacques shook his head. "Monsieur has said that the chateau is immense. One might find it difficult without a guide."

"And you will be that guide," I said, with assurance.

He shook his head still more vigorously. "Impossible! Madam would object. Besides, there is Alphonse."

"Alphonse? Who is he?"

"He is madam's confidential servant."

"At least you can tell me the way to the towers."

"I have never been to the towers," the man persisted.

"Then the staircase is concealed?" I asked sharply, irritated at his hypocrisy.

"I have seen the tapestry near the gallery move very strangely," he blurted out.

Captain Forbes, then, was imprisoned in one of the towers. The staircase leading thither was concealed behind a secret door hidden by a tapestry. This door was near the gallery. So far so well. But I remembered that there was one central tower, flanked by three smaller towers. In which of them was Captain Forbes held a prisoner? I came to the point directly. To fence with the fellow was wasting time.

"The rooms in the towers themselves must be interesting. In medieval times they were no doubt used as dungeons, if there can be dungeons in the air. In which of these towers does Dr. Starva usually lodge his friends?"

I asked the question not without trepidation. I was tolerably sure of my man, but for the moment I feared that I had overshot the mark. He poised a tray on his palm and shuffled hastily to the door, as if he were frightened at the information he had already given.

"You have forgotten something," I said carelessly, and tapped the notes on the table. He hesitated; then, returning, snatched at them.

"When one has ascended the secret stairway," he said in a low voice, "one finds oneself in a bare room. That is the central tower. It is a triangle in shape. At the corners of the triangle there are three doors opening on three smaller rooms, the dungeons, as monsieur calls them. One of these rooms is the oratory of madam. Monsieur knows that madam is very religious. When madam is not to be seen she is at her prayers."

Again he seized his tray, but I had still another question to ask.

"Which of these rooms is the oratory? And in which does Dr. Starva lodge his friends?"

"But, monsieur, I do not know," he stammered, and again seized his tray.

"You know very well, if you think," I commanded.

He rubbed his nose, a gesture curiously reflective and agitated. He turned himself about like a top as he tried, or pretended to try, to remember toward which points of the compass the various rooms faced.

"Monsieur knows that the chateau itself does not face either south, north, east, or west. The oratory is to the south. No; it points to the west. The locked room, Dr. Starva's, that is to the east. But no—truly, your excellency, it is impossible for me to remember."

He fled from the room, the dishes on his tray rattling in his perturbation.

But he had told me much. I knew that if I could find the secret staircase to the towers, if I could force open the door behind the tapestry, I might bag both my birds with one shot.

Captain Forbes in his prison, or Madame de Varnier at her prayers—it was all one to me.

CHAPTER XXIII.

I DID not hesitate. There was no time like the present. This servant had been false to Madame de Varnier, false to Dr. Starva. He would betray me with as little compunction if it were made worth his while.

I walked slowly up the grand stairway leading from the hall. I gained the gallery that ran about the hall, meeting no one. I pretended to be interested in examining the designs of the tapestry. I tapped the wall as I moved deliberately along. It seemed to be quite solid in every direction. I began to think that Jacques had been playing with me.

As I stood there hesitating, Alphonse, the confidential servant of Madame de Varnier, appeared suddenly before me. Either his tread had been catlike or the secret staircase was very near. I thought I read consternation on his face. I leaned over the carved railing of the gallery, gazing down into the hall.

"Am I not to see Madame de Varnier before long?"

"I shall tell madam that your excellency is waiting."

"If you please."

I walked carelessly down the long corridor that led to my room. I closed the door, but I was careful to hold the handle in my hand, and in an instant my eye was at the keyhole.

He had paused irresolutely, looking down the corridor toward my room. Evidently he was dismayed at having been surprised by me. He was hesitating whether he should return to warn Madame de Varnier. Luckily he did not hesitate long.

He vanished round the corner of the corridor. In an instant I had followed him. As he lifted the tapestry he touched a spring. A door opened noiselessly.

"One moment, Alphonse," I cried.

He attempted to close the door again. Finding that impossible, his presence of mind deserted him. I brushed by him, and had pushed open the door at the head of the stairway before he could come to a decision.

"Wait here!" I said in a tone of command. "I have an appointment with Madame de Varnier. You were coming for me, of course?"

"No," he answered sullenly. "Madam is at her devotions; she is not to be disturbed."

"I am the best judge of that." And added again, "Wait here!"

I found myself in a great barnlike room when I had locked the door behind me at the head of the staircase. It was lighted dimly by narrow windows placed high against the roof of rafters, and was almost bare of furniture. At the three angles of this room were the three closed doors. So far the crafty knave had told the truth. But in which of these rooms should I find Madame de Varnier? And in which Captain Forbes?

It availed me little to have penetrated so far into the enemy's stronghold unless I could accomplish still more. At any moment Alphonse might give the alarm, and I wished to take Madame de Varnier by surprise.

I began to make a circuit of the triangular room. I paused at each door and knocked softly. At none of the rooms did I receive any response. I was at once perplexed and dismayed. There was no reason why either Captain Forbes or Madame de Varnier should keep silence.

And then a maddening thought struck me. Perhaps my crafty knave, Jacques, had been more cunning than I had given him the credit of being. What if he had cleverly whetted my curiosity, acting on instructions from Dr. Starva? What if Alphonse had deliberately lured me here? What if I were a prisoner myself?

Dismayed that I should have been so great a fool, I again made the round of each of the doors, not knocking this time, but shaking the handle of each. And as I seized the handle of the third door, it yielded to the touch and swung silently on its hinges. I stood at the lintel, abashed at my angry intrusion. It was the oratory of Madame de Varnier.

Little larger than a closet, and in shape a half-crescent; the walls were hung with purple velvet. Facing me was an altar. Two tapers flickered on either side of the crucifix.

Before the altar, her eyes bent to the crucifix, knelt Madame de Varnier, the adventuress, absorbed in her devotions. Even my entrance was unnoticed.

But it was not the piety of this extraordinary woman that held me petrified in astonishment and speechless.

Within arm's reach, as I stood there, was a bier. And on it, his hands crossed on his breast, his pallid face strangely calm, lay the mortal remains of him whom I knew at once to be Sir Mortimer Brett.

It was a terrifying apparition. Terrifying, because it might have been myself lying there, so strikingly similar at first sight was the likeness of myself to the dead minister. But as the candles, which had flickered in

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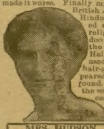

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the draught made by the open door, burned more steadily and I looked at his face closely I saw that after all the resemblance was but superficial. I recovered my senses. Now at last I was to know the truth.

Twice I opened my lips to call to the woman who knelt there. But I could not bring myself to speak. The holy dead banished passion from this place. Here I could not reproach and threaten her. I stood silently at the threshold, pitying rather than condemning, waiting for her to discover my presence. Minutes passed before she turned her head.

Our eyes met, myself sternly questioning with a look. Startled she was at my dramatic entrance, but she met my stern look in absolute calm. No terror or shadow of guilt distorted her tragic beauty. I had come to denounce, to demand justice. I found myself rather pitying.

"Madame de Varnier," I said gently, "the hour has come when you must tell me the truth."

I raised her to her feet and led her from the oratory, closing the door behind me.

She clung to me in the fervor of her appeal.

"Yes," she whispered, "it is the hour when you must know the truth."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE great room of the central tower was almost bare of furniture, as I have said. In the center was a long table such as one sometimes sees in the refectory of a monastery. Half a dozen chairs stood against the walls. I placed two of these chairs near the table.

"Not here," she cried, glancing toward the little room we had left.

"And why not? Here at least we shall be free from interruption."

She went to the door of the staircase.

"It is locked," she cried, startled.

"Yes, I have taken the precaution of seeing that we are not disturbed," I said calmly. "Now, madam, in which of those two rooms is Captain Forbes a prisoner?"

If my knowledge surprised her, she concealed her chagrin cleverly. She gesticulated to the room at the right of the oratory.

"And perhaps the key of the staircase unlocks that door as well?"

She shook her head, smiling at me defiantly.

"Has your servant the key?"

"No."

"Then, where is it?"

"Women are supposed not to have pockets. But I can hide a key about my person as well as you. How did you find your way here?"

"I surprised Alphonse opening the door of the staircase behind the tapestry."

"Ah, you are clever. I knew it," she cried approvingly.

"This is no time for compliments. Captain Forbes must be released."

"And if I refuse?"

"I shall insist."

"Very well, I refuse."

I looked my perplexity. Tho we were so near the chamber of death, with the facile lightheartedness of the Latin race she banished its grim memory. This woman had nerves of steel. She moved in callous indifference from tragic scenes to those of flippant comedy. Or perhaps she saw the uselessness of enraging me.

"If I compel you forcibly——"

"Do American gentlemen assault their hostesses?"

She had me at a complete disadvantage. To carry out my threat was impossible.

"Come, madam, let us come to terms."

"Gladly, monsieur." She swept me a mock courtesy.

"And they are?"

"He shall walk out of the chateau when you have heard my story."

"Even if I refuse to help you?"

She hesitated a moment. "Yes," she promised, with a sigh.

I put no great faith in that promise. Nothing was simpler than for her to promise. But if presently she still refused, I could resort to extreme measures then as readily as now. If Captain Forbes was indeed a prisoner of Madame de Varnier, and she actually did have in her possession the key that would open the door of his prison, I held Madame de Varnier equally at a disadvantage.

"He is unharmed, then?"

"A scratch or two, perhaps. But to a brave soldier it is nothing. He is a tactless visitor, your Captain Forbes. I confess that the methods of Dr. Starva are not too delicate in finesse. But since he has committed the blunder of detaining him, I prefer not to make it worse by releasing him—just yet."

I accepted her decision in silence.

"I could have wished you in a more favorable mood, monsieur," she said wistfully. "I am afraid you will listen to me as a judge rather than as a friend."

"Be sure of this; if I am to help you it will be only to save you perhaps from the consequences of your folly."

"Myself!" she protested passionately. "Merciful Heaven, I am not thinking of myself. Sometimes the individual must be sacrificed to save a race. Did Joan of Arc or Charlotte Corday think of themselves? Life, honor—everything—I sacrifice them a thousand times to save my country."

She was no longer the saint praying for the dead at the altar. A fierce energy possessed her. Her words filled me with something akin to horror. She extolled a murderess. Were her own hands red with murder?

"It is the price I must pay," she continued gloomily. "I pay it without murmuring. If I were a man I should be fighting for my poor people with the sword. I am a weak woman. I must fight with a woman's weapons. Sometimes those weapons have been spying, even what you might call treachery. Say that you despise me."

"The story," I cried. "Your prelude, madam, is not fortunate."

She shook her head wearily. Did she despair already of my aid?

"Nevertheless, I say these weapons are sometimes necessary in my unequal fight for an oppressed race. When I use them against enemies, far from feeling remorse or pity, I glory in causing pain. But sometimes there crosses my path one whom I respect, who is generous and strong. It is then that I shudder at the suffering I must cause. But I do not spare him, however brave and generous he may be."

"Such a one was Sir Mortimer Brett," I interrupted sternly.

"For my country I glory that Sir Mortimer has stooped to dishonor. For my country you must bear the burden of his dishonor."

She spoke rapidly, her voice rising from a whisper to a cry that was strident and harsh. She made strange gestures as tho she were in physical pain, striking the table with her open palm as she spoke the last words.

"I must bear the burden of Sir Mortimer's dishonor!"

Now that the words were spoken I knew that I had expected them. For this I had come to the chateau. This was my task.

"You will do this—not for me; I am not so mad as to dream that now. I am your enemy in spite of myself. Presently you will despise me and hate me. But you cannot escape from the ordeal. But for that other woman—the woman you have sworn to help—for her you will make the sacrifice."

"You speak in riddles," I said coldly. "Enough of vague menace and warning."

"She will go down on her knees to you. She will offer you any reward, any happiness. In saving the honor of her name, you must stoop to dishonor."

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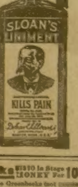

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"Never! Honor is not to be purchased in that coin."

"Or what the world calls dishonor," she added in eager haste. "It is the motive that exalts the deed. Is it not always noble to suffer for another? And it is not merely the happiness of one woman I place in your hands. It is the chastity of a thousand women—the appeasing of the hunger of ten thousand children—the destiny of a race."

"You will find that I am not to be moved by these heroics. Tell me how I am to save the honor of Sir Mortimer Brett."

"What in the sight of God is a lie," she continued vehemently, heedless of my impatience, "if it will save the pure soul of a young girl, if it will give back children to their mothers? Say boldly that I am asking you to act a lie? Look, we will no longer fool ourselves. I ask you to do a little evil that much good may come. I ask you to submit to disgrace, not merely for this woman of your own society, but that you may be the savior of a nation. Monsieur, be merciful!"

"The facts!" I insisted.

"First of all, tho it may weary you, I wish to tell you a little of myself. My parents were of that most unhappy race, the Macedonian Christians. My father was rich for that country; we were happy. But when I was a child I was awakened one night by the crash of musketry and the glare of flames. The Turkish butchers had attacked our vilayet. I saw my sister snatched from her mother's arms and stabbed before my eyes. A blow felled my mother. My father was thrown to earth, manacled and trodden upon. I was taken captive.

"My fate would have been even more horrible had I not been the captive of a Turkish officer who was kind to me and adopted me. But he was one of that hated race, and secretly I tolerated his kindness only to be revenged. In some way he offended the Sultan; my protector was banished. We lived in Paris.

"At last the hour of my vengeance came. He had an enemy, one of his own race. I betrayed him. He died a violent death, and that night, I think, I was happy.

"I found myself rich; he had left me everything. I was beautiful and well educated; a life of pleasure lay before me. Well, I have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure. But that I might be happy? No. If I have banqueted with princes, it was to learn their secrets. I have flattered and cajoled enemies that I might betray them. Sometimes I have betrayed my friends. In short, I am consecrated to my country. For her I have made myself an adventuress. If I could not directly further her cause, there were secrets to be bought and sold at a price. The money purchased bread and arms. I have schemed, intrigued, betrayed, tempted—always to bring Macedonia one step nearer her freedom."

"Madame de Varnier," I interrupted, with a brutal directness, "at any other time these personal reminiscences might be interesting enough, but now——"

"You are adamant," she cried despairingly. "It is impossible, it seems, to awaken your sympathy. Then I must appeal to your intelligence. You must understand something of the political situation."

"I know enough of that already. Once more I must beg you to come to the episode of Sir Mortimer Brett."

"How can you know anything of the complexities of the Balkan situation?" she demanded, at once startled and surprised.

"Suffice it that I know this: Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria will invade Turkish Macedonia, and free that territory from the Turkish yoke, if his army is financed by Kuhn, a banker of New York City but a Macedonian by birth. This banker makes one stipulation: Bulgaria must have England's promise of her moral support; England must promise Bulgaria a free field. Sir Mortimer Brett was to have gained that promise from England. You made Sir Mortimer the victim of your intrigues. How, and to what extent—that is what I wish now to know?"

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"I was sent to Sofia to accomplish that. It seemed a hopeless task. For fifteen years he had resisted every entreaty and bribe. He had the absolute confidence of the British Foreign Office. But it was necessary to win him over at any cost. We had secret information to the effect that if he advised England's interference she would interfere.

"You are impatient; I shall not weary you by telling of my efforts. Sir Mortimer was a cold man and extremely difficult of approach. For some time I despaired of influencing him. But I learned at last that beneath his calm exterior was actually a heart that throbbed—for the sufferings of Macedonia."

"How did you learn this?" I demanded, curiously, as she paused.

"You will despise me the more when I tell you," she replied hesitatingly, and her face was scarlet. "I stole his diary. It seems atrocious to you that I should so have repaid his kindness; but I have told you that to play the spy, to be the high priestess of cunning, has been my lot. This diary revealed to me Sir Mortimer's true character.

"I have said that he was extremely reserved, a virtue that all diplomatists must possess. He was never to be tricked or excited into a rash statement. Every word he spoke with the precision of an automaton, because every spoken word was weighed."

"And he found relief by giving expression to his emotions in his diary?"

"Yes; what he had hidden from the world there he revealed; and in the pages of this diary I learned two facts that were of vital importance to me."

"I think I can guess them," I said coldly. "First, that Sir Mortimer loved you; secondly, that he was tempted to put an end to the atrocities in Macedonia by advocating England's support of Bulgaria."

"Since you have taken the first fact for granted, I shall not contradict you. But I told you that Sir Mortimer found relief in his diary for the emotions which he sternly repressed before the world. As to your second guess, it is only partially correct. I learned much more than that. I learned that he was in correspondence with the banker, Otto Kuhn. He had given this banker a half-promise that he would do his utmost to influence England, provided that Kuhn financed the invasion in a sufficiently liberal manner to insure its success."

"And with the information obtained so treacherously your task was easy."

"At least it was easier. I persevered when I was about to despair. I was successful to this extent: Sir Mortimer agreed to have a secret meeting with the banker at this chateau—today."

"Today!" I stammered. "And Sir Mortimer is dead!"

"I learned of his death when you were in the kursaal with me."

"You need say no more. I understand why you have brought me to the chateau only too well. A just fate snatched from your lips the cup of success. But fate dashed one cup from your hand only to tempt you with another. I have seen for myself that I bear a sufficiently marked resemblance to deceive one who has known Sir Mortimer but slightly. Perhaps Kuhn has never actually met Sir Mortimer——"

"Never!" interrupted Madame de Varnier, her voice trembling.

"And you wish me to do—what?"

"An interview of half an hour and the destinies of a nation will be changed. Oh, I know that the move is a desperate one. Its audacity is the best augury of success. Look, I give you power such as few men have held. Sir Mortimer lies in that room dead. But there are four people only who know of his death: Dr. Starva, Alphonse, myself, and yourself. One hour after this interview, it will be given out that he has died suddenly from heart failure. But in the meanwhile the interview between yourself and the banker will have taken place."

"Woman, are you mad!" I cried scornfully. "Let us suppose for the moment that this interview has taken place between myself and the banker. Let us say that the deception has proved to be completely successful. The loan is promised to Ferdinand, but how is that promise to be made good? There are papers to be signed and attested—there are checks to be drawn and receipts to be given. Who is to sign these documents—who is to sign the receipts? I, the false Sir Mortimer? Egregious folly! Your fanaticism has run away with your common

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This Doll will amuse the children, they are noisy babies, can hear them cry all over the house sounds just like a real baby. Has long white dress trimmed with ribbon and lace and wears a baby bonnet, sent free by mail for selling only 6 boxes Rosebud Salve at 25c each and return us $1.50. Send your name and address WE TRUST YOU with salve
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sense. There is no pressure on earth that could make me consent to your scheme. Your banker would not be so great a fool as to be deceived, I say again, even if I consented. Did you think he would hand out a package to you containing millions as a grocer passes a packet of soap across the counter to a customer?"

That I should even discuss the matter with her at all seemed to her a hopeful sign. She drew her chair closer to me. I regarded her disdainfully. For a clever woman, her scheme seemed to me preposterous on the face of it.

"Do you think, my dear monsieur, that the perplexities you mention have not occurred to me?" She was violently scornful in her turn. "Yes; and there are a hundred others. But I have thought of them all. Money? I have not mentioned money or checks or receipts. I am not quite an imbecile. I have arranged all that. You have simply to see this Kuhn. There will be no discussion. You will lay before him an ultimatum. If he agrees, a document will be given to him promising on the part of England her moral support. This document will have been officially sealed by the minister of the British Foreign Office. It will already have the signature of Sir Mortimer Brett."

She leaned close to me. Her breath was in my face. Her eyes were liquid fire. Because I was silent for the moment she imagined me tempted. But if I were silent it was because my scorn was too great for utterance.

"A forgery!" I said at last.

"Listen. The document itself is official. It awaited merely the signature of Sir Mortimer Brett."

"How was that obtained, since Sir Mortimer is dead?"

"Dr. Starva is a clever penman. That is why he is useful."

I sprang to my feet, pushing back my chair so abruptly as to overturn it. Dr. Starva's name was a red flag to goad me to enraged impatience.

"And this is the forgery that is to save a nation!" I cried in fierce contempt. "I say again and again, you are a fool—a fool to th[illegible] that your scheme can be successful—

"Will England repudiate an act of her minister because he dies shortly after attesting it? I tell you, monsieur, I have counted the chances. I shall succeed——'

"And the loyalty of Dr. Starva? You may count on that? I am willing to believe that your mad project has been planned with the hope that it may benefit your oppressed race. I will give to you the doubtful virtue of fanaticism. But that arch-fiend Starva—it is impossible that he be influenced by an unselfish motive. That death-mask, did you know its significance till last night? Madame de Varnier, be advised by me before it is too late. You have said I am your enemy. It is true. If I have come to this chateau as your guest, it was to spy on you—to learn what I have just learned, to learn what I shall learn."

"Do you think I have been blind to that?" she interrupted, smiling disdainfully.

"Had treachery been absent—had the foul play of thugs and murderers not been resorted to—I should still have refused to aid you. But when I find myself secretly watched while I am your guest—when I am perfidiously offered a drug, which, by the way, I did not take—when I see an English gentleman treated with the violence of the Middle Ages—lastly, when the woman whom I have sworn to help is shot at by a lurking villain—I have a right to my revenge. I shall have it. Be sure of that."

"You say that Starva attempted to murder Helena Brett?"

"Scarcely two hours since," I returned, trembling with rage. "Now, Madame de Varnier, I have listened to you patiently. Listen to me. I shall have justice. You have chosen to ally yourself with a forger, a thief, and a would-be murderer. You will be dragged down with him unless you throw yourself on my mercy. Great God, your madness reaches its apotheosis in this: You resort to every crime that you may bring freedom a little nearer to your precious Macedonians; and I know, as absolutely as if he had confessed to me, that Dr. Starva is one of the band of assassins who has doomed to a violent death the very messiah you look to for succor."

She stared at me a full half-minute, this adventuress with nerves of steel. But it was the woman, the lover, who looked up at me. She loved Ferdinand; I read it in her anguished face. I made my last appeal.

"Cast off that scoundrel before it is too late—before he betrays you. Help me to bring him to justice before he dooms to death the prince you worship. Make to me a full confession help me to rescue the great name of Sir Mortimer Brett from the dishonor that you aver (but have in no way proved) besmirches it—and I swear to you that you shall be spared."

She laughed at my appeal. If the laughter was hysterical, it was also defiant and fearless.

"My dear Monsieur Haddon, you are too delicious. Do you think I have played my last card? Do you think I am so easily frightened by your scowls and loud voice? The dishonor of Sir Mortimer Brett not yet proved? It is proved only too surely, and you are to see those proofs presently. You have called me a fool more than once; permit me to return the compliment in all sincerity. I have told you much—enough to send Dr. Starva and myself to jail for many tedious years. But I can trust you with my secrets because I know only too surely that you dare not betray them. You will realize that presently; have no fears. You see I can threaten as well as yourself, and behind my threats is something more formidable than a scowling face."

"Very well," I cried, not without satisfaction (for I had offered to spare her because I pitied, rather than because I thought it wise). "We understand each other thoroly. In twenty-four hours I [illegible]'l have done my best to put you and your dear comrade behind the bars. And you"

"I shall drag you with us if you by any chance are successful. You say you did not take the drug—that you were acting that you might keep watch on our movements. Who will believe you? Captain Forbes? I think not. You will find it difficult, my dear monsieur, to extricate yourself from my net."

"Say that I grant that," I said contemptuously, "you have still the possible treachery of Dr. Starva to deal with."

This time she controlled her agitation, tho in her eyes lurked terror and fear.

"For the present Dr. Starva [illegible] Had I remained in ignorance of the meaning of that horrible [illegible] I might have listened to your warn[illegible] with some misgiving. But sin[illegible] have deepened my suspicions concerning him, I have been able to rearrange my plans. Dr. Starva is no longer necessary to me. Even if he is a member of the Committee of Freedom, he is no more dangerous than any other member, and with them he will be punished presently. In the meantime their intended victim is warned. No, Monsieur Haddon, your threats do not frighten me. On the contrary, it is time for me to threaten."

"I have waited patiently enough, I hope, madam."

I flung myself into my chair again with a careless [illegible] was about to [illegible] her claws. For [illegible] fierce cunning and treachery of the tigress were hers when aroused.

CHAPTER XXV

"BEFORE we settle our affair I must speak to Alphonse."

"To what purpose?" I demanded suspiciously.

"You shall hear for yourself. Have no fear that I am to play you a trick. I shall give him my message before you."

"Pardon me if I refuse. I am un-

(Continued on Page [illegible])

Tonight

Let's End That Corn!

Apply a little Blue-jay plaster. That brings a wonderful wax in touch with the corn, and protects it.

This wax was invented by a chemist who has spent 25 years studying corns.

Tomorrow

You'll forget the corn. Blue-jay ends all pain.

It will prove to you that all corn-pains are needless. You can stop them in an instant—and forever—with a Blue-jay. You will always do that when you know the facts.

Next Day

The corn will disappear for good. And no soreness follows. Blue-jay has proved that on 70 million corns. It will prove it to you, we promise. After that, you will never keep a corn.

BAUER & BLACK, Chicago and New York
Makers of Surgical Dressings, etc.

15c and 25c at Druggists

Blue-jay
Ends Corns

Spectacles ON TRIAL Free

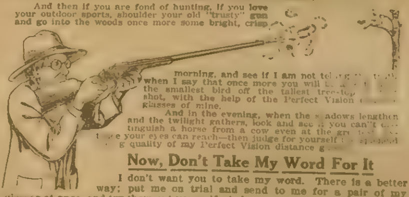
Don't Send Me One Cent When You Answer This

No, I don't want you to send me one single, solitary penny when you answer this announcement, and the reason is this: I have made up my mind to mail you a brand new pair of my Perfect Vision glasses absolutely free. I insist also on even paying the postage right to your door so you can try them out in the quiet of your own home as an advertisement.

Then you can do me a favor. Just as quick as they come, I want you to put them on, sit right down by the fireplace, by the open hearth, and I am sure you'll be agreeably surprised to discover that you can once more read the very finest print in your bible, even by the dim firelight. Put them on and see if I am not correct when I say that you will again be able to thread the smallest-eyed needle you can lay your hands on; do the most delicate embroidery and crochet, and keep on with the [illegible] hours without headache or eye-pain and with [illegible] and comfort as you ever did in the days of your youth.

THEY'LL ENABLE YOU TO READ THE FINEST PRINT OR SHOOT A BIRD OFF THE TALLEST TREE

And then if you are fond of hunting, if you love your outdoor sports, shoulder your old "trusty" gun and go into the woods once more some bright, crisp morning, and see if I am not tel[illegible] when I say that once more you will [illegible] the smallest bird off the tallest tree-top [illegible] shot, with the help of the Perfect Vision [illegible] glasses of mine.



And in the evening, when the shadows lengthen and the twilight gathers, look and see if you can't distinguish a horse from a cow even at the gr[illegible] your eyes can reach—then judge for yourself [illegible] g quality of my Perfect Vision distance g[illegible]

Now, Don't Take My Word For It

I don't want you to take my word. There is a better way; put me on trial and send to me for a pair of my glasses at once, and try them out yourself—indoors, outdoors, everywhere and anywhere, morning, noon and night; hunting, driving, reading, sewing, anyway and everyway. Put them to every test you can, and then if you find that every word I have said about them is honest and true; if they really do what I have said they will do; if you can see again with the perfect eyesight of the days gone by, then, and then only, I will want you to do me a good turn by speaking a good word for my glasses, showing them around to your friends and neighbors and the people you have a chance to talk to. Surely you will be willing to do this for me if my Perfect Vision glasses help you in the way I say.

If you want to do me this favor, just write your name and address and age on the below certificate. Do this at once and it will entitle you to a pair of my Gold-Filled Perfect Vision spectacles, in a handsome plush-lined German-silver-tipped pocketbook spectacle case, absolutely free of charge, sent prepaid—all charges paid in advance by me—on ten days' free trial. You must, however, act promptly, as I make this offer as an advertisement.

Write your name, address and age on the below certificate and mail it to me at once.

ST. LOUIS SPECTACLE HOUSE, Dept. 33, ST. LOUIS, MO.

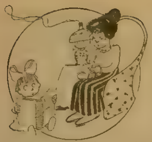
I herewith enclose this certificate, which entitles me to a pair of your [illegible] gold-filled Perfect Vision spectacles, complete, also a fine leatherette, [illegible] German-silver-tipped pocketbook spectacle case on ten days' free trial, as stated in the above advertisement, and if I find that they really and truly are worth more than you are asking for them and that it will [illegible] impossible for me to buy them [illegible] the small sum of $1.50. But if, for any reason [illegible] them (and I myself am to be the sole judge), I [illegible] you without paying you a single cent for them, as you agree[illegible] advertisement to send them on absolute free trial, and I am [illegible] you stick to your word. Be sure to answer the following qu[illegible]

How old are you.......How many years have you used glasses (if any)

Name . . . .

[illegible] . . .

[illegible] Box No. State. . . . .



Susie—"Say, mother, do setter dogs set on eggs?"

The Reason.

During a military review at Aldershot last summer one of the foreign attaches had made himself obnoxious to several staff officers by asking ridiculous and often impertinent questions. Turning to an old infantry officer, he said:

"How is it, Colonel, that your bugle call, 'Advance,' is so short while the 'Retreat' is just the reverse?"

"Because, sir," replied the veteran, "when a British soldier goes into action it only needs a single note from a bugle to make him advance anywhere, but it takes a whole brass band to make him retire."

SOMETHING WORTH WHILE.

Of my raiment as a boy
Which would tend to give me joy,
From the first cap that enchants
Down to boyhood's first long pants,
What one item of the whole,
Taking me from crown to sole,
Could I best afford to lose?
Surely not those squeaky shoes!

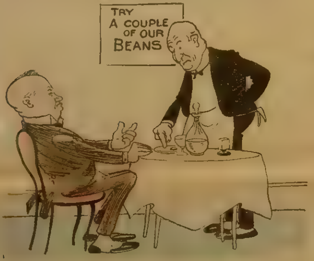
All the other clothes I wore
Called for glance of eye before
Newness drew a jostling crowd
Of my comrades—critics loud.
But with shoes—no need to wait
If one used a proper gait:
Far ahead they told the news,
Those delightful squeaky shoes.

I am sure that modern boys
Do not wear such wondrous joys
Can it be some spell unique
Has been worked to kill the squeak?
It must be that this is so,
For it's gone, but this I know:
If I were a boy, I'd choose
Nothing else than squeaky shoes!

No Cause for Alarm.

Mrs. Finnegan (to Mike, who has just come home—"Phwat's all the noise below? Did I hear some wan shout 'Fire'?"

Finnegan—"Ye did; but make yersilf aisy. The foire's in Widdy Malone's tiniment on the first flure, an' there's six flures bechune it an' us."



TRY A COUPLE OF OUR BEANS

Customer—"That was the driest, flattest sandwich I ever tried to chew into!"
Waiter—"Why, here's your sandwich! You ate your check!"

No Chirping There.

An Irishman tried to shoot a sparrow with a very old musket. He fired. The bird, with a chirp or two, flew away unconcerned in the foreground, and Pat was swiftly laid on his back. Picking himself up and shaking his fist at the bird, he exclaimed: "Be jabbers, ye wouldn't 'a' chirruped if ye'd been at this end of the gun."

It Was Ethel's Turn.

Several members of a women's club were chatting with a little daughter of their hostess.

"I suppose you are a great help to your mamma," said one.

"Oh, yes," replied the little miss, "and so is Ethel; but it is my turn to count the spoons today after the company is gone."

A Good Job.

A man in the country once asked Cy Warman what he did for a living.

"I work for the Grand Trunk," said Warman.

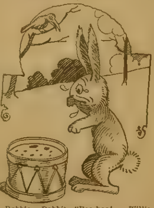
"What kind of a job have you got—do you sell tickets or handle baggage?"

"Oh, I've got a better job than either of those," said Cy. "You know the man who goes alongside of the train and taps the wheels with a hammer to see that everything's all right. Well, I help him listen."

Plenty of Patience.

"What! Giving up already, my boy?" said a gentleman to a youthful angler. "You must bring a little more patience with you another time."

"I brought enough patience, mister, but I didn't bring enough worms."



Robbie Rabbit—"Boo-hoo! Willie Woodpecker's been playin' my drum again."

First Aid.

A prominent physician was recently called to his telephone by a colored woman formerly in the service of his wife. In great agitation the woman advised the physician that her youngest child was in a bad way.

"What seems to be the trouble?" asked the doctor.

"Doc, she done swallered a bottle of ink!"

"I'll be over there in a short while to see her," said the doctor. "Have you done anything for her?"

"I done give her three pieces o' blottin' paper, Doc," said the colored woman, doubtfully.

Had Waited Longest.

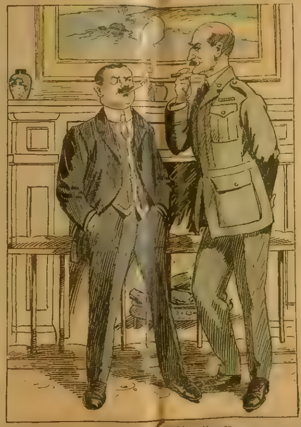
Physician (looking into his anteroom, where a number of patients are waiting) "Who has been waiting longest?"

Tailor (who has called to present a bill)—"I have, doctor. I delivered the clothes to you three years ago."

No Good at Excuses.

Teacher—"Tommy, next time you are late bring an excuse from your father."

Tommy—"Who? Pa? Why, he ain't any good at excuses; ma finds him out every time."



"Don't you think I should look rath[illegible] cool in uniform?"
"Well, of course, my dear fellow, [illegible]'t much of a disguise."

Wasted Effort.

They were at dinner and the dainties were on the table.

"Will you take tart or pudding?" asked papa of Tommy.

"Tart," said Tommy, promptly.

His father sighed as he recalled the many lessons on manners he had given the boy.

"Tart what?" he queried kindly.

But Tommy's eyes were glued on the pastry.

"Tart what?" asked the father again, sharply this time.

"Tart first," answered Tommy, triumphantly.

Might Be a Better Spot.

"I am surprised," said the parson to a youngster indulging in Sunday morning fishing, "to find you fishing here, my boy."

"Why," asked the surprised boy, "d'ye know any other place where they bite better?"

His Name.

"What's your name?" a Kentuckian asked a negro boy.

"Well, boss," he answered, "ever' where I goes they give me a new name, but my maiden name was Moses."

Poor Hubby.

"I want some cigars for my husband."

"Yes, ma'am. What [illegible]d?"

"O[illegible] the sort that [illegible] e the pr[illegible] labels. I wish to decorate a bowl."

COWBOY SONG.

There was a little gal and she lived
with her mother,
All the devils in the world couldn't
scare up such another.

But I'd rather be at home with the girl
I love
That monkey with this dad-blamed
mule

What Did He Mean?

Hicks—"You have a talking machine, haven't you?"

Wicks—"Yes, I have two talking machines at my house. One you can turn off when you get tired of the line of talk, and the other one you can't."

The Consequences.

"Jipson thinks he's the big gun around this place."

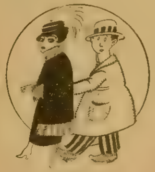
"Then, if he's not careful, he'll find himself fired."

A Great Idea.

"I've got a great money-making idea," said Mr. Binks to his neighbor.

"What's that?" inquired the neighbor.

"Do you see that automobile of mine?" asked Mr. Binks, pointing with all of the pride of a campaign speaker. "Well, every time I take that car apart to fix it and put it together I always have fifteen or twenty parts left over and I can't find any room for them. I have taken that car apart three times and I have got the back end of my garage full of parts and the car runs just as well as it ever did. My idea is this: I think when a man has taken a car apart say six times he will have enough parts left over to build a new car exclusive of the body. I am going to take my car apart every week and I think I ought to be able to build at least three new cars out of it. Then I will sell the old car and get another and start taking that apart. I figure that I ought to clean up about 300 per cent on every car that I buy."



Mrs. Jabb—"Did Dobson ever repay you for that loan?"

Jabb—"In a way! He hasn't spoken to me since I let him have it!"

The Backbone.

The teacher of a class of small children recently gave a physiology lesson on the bones of the body. The time to ask questions had come.

"Who will tell me what the backbone is?"

The question was a poser, and no one ventured to reply.

Finally the teacher detected a gleam of hope in Sammy's face and smiled encouragingly at him.

"Well, Sammy?"

"The backbone is a long, straight bone. Your head sits on one end and you sit on the other," answered Sammy.

Our Great Need.

Hyde Park Orator—"My friends, if we were each of us to turn and look ourselves squarely in the face what should we each find we needed most?"

Voice from Crowd—"An india-rubber neck, mister."

Unnecessary.

"Do you tell your wife everything?"

"It isn't necessary. She knows everything."

THE TERROR.

He was a baby bandit
And his name was "Percy Clarence"
(You would never understand it,
But he had that kind of parents.)

He horrified his father
And he terrified his mother
And made a lot of bother
In one way or another

He was 3 years old, remember,
But he wasn't to be trusted
On the twentieth of December
His sister's bank he busted!

Then, sober counsel scorning,
He nearly came a cropper;
He ran away one morning
And was brought home by a copper!

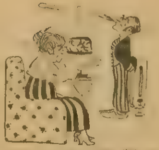
The tearful mother thanked him—
The p'leeceman, not the baby
And then she soundly spanked him
(The bandit), or will—maybe.

Obeying Orders.

A newly enrolled volunteer was rather alarmed during his first experience of a sham battle, especially as he heard the colonel in command say that everything was to be done as in actual warfare. No sooner was the first blank cartridge fired than the frightened soldier dropped his gun and took to his heels.

"Hey! where are you running to?" shouted the captain, as he fled past him.

"Oh," said the man, "it is all right, sir. I am just doing the same as I would do in actual war."



Wifey—"The paper says that in Borneo a wife can be bought for a dollar. Isn't that dreadful?"

Hubby—"Oh no. A really good wife would be worth that."

Not Quite Symmetrical.

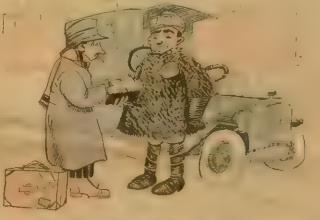
"There are always two sides to an argument," remarked the Parlor Philosopher.

"Which is all the more remarkable when you consider that there [illegible] only one end," said the Mere Man.—Judge.

Result of Zeal.

"I am sorry your husband was taken sick just as he was working so hard for our prohibition campaign. What seems to be the trouble?"

"The doctor says he has water on the brain."



Taxi Driver (after ride)—"Seventy-five dollars, charge."
Patron—"I have only $50."
Taxi Driver—"Get in, again, then and I'll back up $25 worth."

The Seasons.

Down on the lower East Side of New York, where sweatshops abound, a teacher was talking to her class about the four seasons. At the end of the task she began to question.

"Rebecca, how many seasons have we?"

"Two," replied Rebecca. "Slack and busy."

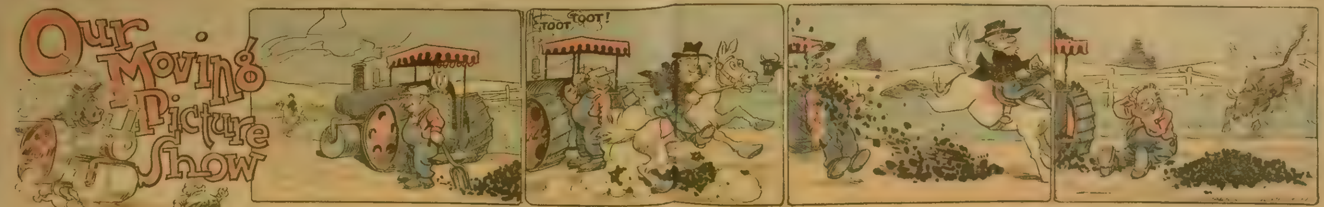
Diplomatic.

It was evidently her first visit to the hair department of the great emporium, and she was noticeably embarrassed.

"I—er—wish to look at some—er—false hair," she stammered.

"Very well, miss," rejoined the diplomatic saleswoman. "What shade does your friend desire?"

THE WORST IS YET TO COME



Steam roller Sam—"Hah! There comes the deacon on his old gray mare. I'll give the whistle a couple of toots when they pass and scare the daylights out of them!"

"Haw! Haw! The old mare has got a little life left, hain't she? Hang on deacon. I'm bettin' on ye!"

(Scrunch! Thud! Kerplunk!)—"Oof! A 42-centimeter shell has bust! Say, ye old stiff, can't ye take a joke?"

"Oh, wow, wow! My jaw and breadbasket are caved in. Thank heaven, they are gone. Now I'll have a little peace and get my nerve back!" (But he didn't.)

Colin Cole's Million

Or, The Lost Heiress Search

By John Miller Gregory

[illegible]

CHAPTER IX

JACK Lloyd had acted promptly when he saw the big red car go rushing down Thirty-fourth street. Fortu[illegible] a waiting taxi driver had heard the shout of the anxious young attorney, and in a bound had reached his car and thrown open the door. The next instant Jack Lloyd was seated within, urging every possible means to catch the fleeing car, including possible arrest for breaking the speed limit in addition to the danger of accident from other rushing cars.

Down Thirty-fourth street the red car sped, with the taxi in close chase. At the corner, the car ahead turned into Broadway and started toward the Battery. Jack's taxi barely escaped the warning whistle of the traffic policeman, as it careened madly around in the red car's path.

At the next corner the dreaded whistle blew just as the red car passed the crossing, and Jack's chauffeur, cursing softly, threw out his clutch and went down on his brake.

"I've got my eye on 'em, Cap," said the chauffeur. "We'll get 'em if I can keep that red car in sight."

"It'll mean twenty-five for you if you do," shouted Jack, madly straining his eyes to keep the car ahead in sight. He had seen the girl in the black gown turn round and glance over her shoulder, and even fancied he saw a smile of relief pass over her face as she heard the policeman's whistle and saw the pursuing taxi held at the corner while her own car sped safely away.

The next instant the whistle sounded again. The chauffeur was ready, his brake off and the gear shift trembling in the low speed. The clutch caught with a grinding sound, and the car jumped ahead, throwing Jack back into the seat. The succeeding shifts into intermediate and high speed were made almost simultaneously, and the taxi leaped on and rushed after the fast-disappearing red car.

Past Madison Square and Union Square the two cars sped, the [illegible] [illegible] the red car, as the cha[illegible] caution to the winds and braved the angry shouts of the traffic policemen as they rushed at them. In and out among the traf[illegible] [illegible]essly, missing other [illegible]r's breadth, at times seemingly accomplishing the impossible task of going thru spaces smaller [illegible] car itself. Jack held his [illegible] cursed silently.

At Eighth street the red car [illegible] suddenly to the right and sped aw[illegible] ward Fifth avenue, which [illegible] with Jack's taxi but a scant [illegible] behind. At Sixth avenue [illegible] again, doubling back around Washington Square, where it paused, as a slowly moving line of a funeral cortege [illegible] progress. Jack [illegible] eyes [illegible] over his chauffeur's shoulder [illegible] the girl lean forward and say something to the driver of her car. The next instant the huge red machine sprang forward, and like a streak went thru a break in the line of marching mourners and [illegible]

"Go thru it!" Jack shouted, as his chauffeur slowed down his car and turned an inquiring ear toward his passenger.

"You're the boss," muttered the driver, and again stepped on the accelerator. The car sprang forward toward the slowly moving line. There was a shout and a rapid scattering of marchers as the clanking, swaying taxi broke thru the ranks and rushed away.

Jack was too interested in the whereabouts of the red car to look back. He heard the shouts of a few pedestrians and wondered if they had hit any one, but almost immediately discarded the thought as he saw the red car, now a block ahead, pause suddenly and a black-coated figure jump from it and into a taxi which was standing at the corner. Then the red car picked up its speed again, as the taxi with its black-coated passenger turned quickly into Houston street and rushed away toward Broadway.

"She's out of the car!" Jack shouted. "Follow the taxi! Hurry, man! Hurry! I'll make it fifty if you catch her!"

He turned to look at the red car. Into West Broadway from Houston street another car had rushed. As he looked, the red car and the latest arrival met with a clash, and both cars came to a sudden halt. Jack's car was almost upon them. As he leaned thru the window for a better sight of the damage done, he heard a woman's scream, and for a passing second caught the frightened glance of the girl he sought, wrapped in her chauffeur's coat, sitting at the wheel of the red car. Two minutes later his own car had been turned around, and Jack [illegible] standing by the side of the girl he had sought for weeks, who held in her breast the secret of Elsie Cole's whereabouts.

Already a crowd had rushed out to the colliding cars, and Jack had almost to fight his way to the girl's side. She looked at him appealingly, an[illegible] his directions without comment [illegible] bade her step into his t[illegible] ing to a policeman, he qui[illegible] who he was and explained how the accident had happened.

The good-natured pol[illegible] grinned as he looked at the girl [illegible]

"Sure, it's the $5,000 [illegible] gettin', I suppose," he sai[illegible] "What'll we do with this wreck?"

Jack slipped a bank n[illegible] policeman's hand which [illegible] wider grin as the copper [illegible] low back that flashed at him momen[illegible] as he transferred it to his pocket.

"We'll just wheel her in alongside the curbing, and I'll telephone the garage around the corner to come get [illegible] added. "I've got your name, all right, and it'll be time enough to settle this trouble later. The lady wasn't at fault at all, at all," he whispered, as an afterthought, and turning to the crowd he commandeered two or three huskies to range the red car beside the curb, and bade the rest to be moving on.

Inside the taxi, Jack turned expectantly to the waiting girl. There was the suspicion of a tear in her eye and a gentle little trembling at the corners of her mouth.

"We seem to meet under strange circumstances," said Lloyd. "I hope you'll pardon the high-handed manner I had to handle this trouble, but I knew you wouldn't want to be mixed up in that crowd."

"I suppose I ought to thank you for that," the girl replied. "Under other conditions I would be highly grateful. As it is, don't you think you are persecuting us unnecessarily?"

Jack looked at her in astonishment.

"Persecuting?" he asked. "Is it persecution to be working day and night to find a girl and turn over a fortune of a million dollars to her?"

"If I only thought you meant to do that," the girl said wistfully.

The taxi had been moving slowly down West Broadway, and now the driver turned respectfully.

"Where to?" he asked.

Jack turned to the girl, whose face was away from him as she stared unseeing thru the window.

"If you feel that way about it," he said gently, "I am almost willing to let the whole matter drop. I can only assure you that your suspicions are most unjust. I believe my cousin is in great trouble and I have exhausted every means to find her and turn over to her the [illegible] her uncle bequeathed to her. Can you at least not trust me until you have investigated the whole matter? Won't you at least tell me where my cousin is hiding?"

For several minutes the girl was silent, then she turned slowly and looked at him, straight in the eyes, as if she meant to search his very soul.

"Something has told me from the very first that you do not mean to do [illegible]tice, but I was afraid that [illegible] money of that size was too much for human nature to resist. I am going to trust you. Your cousin needs you badly, and but for the ad[illegible] father I would have called [illegible] long since. It may be that I [illegible]ne you a great injustice, Mr. Lloyd. We shall see."

After another careful scrutiny of the young man at her side, she added:

"Please have him take us to York street, Brooklyn."

CHAPTER X.

YORK street, Brooklyn, is not exactly the kind of avenue down which beautiful young women travel for an afternoon's air. Crooked and narrow and mean, it squirms in and out for several short blocks and finally shatters itself into three or four small alleys [illegible] basement.

On both sides of York street there are rows of blank brick tenement houses, resembling more than anything else the bare walls of factory buildings, except that in the front of each there is a small porch with a cover over it and a pair of steep narrow [illegible] [illegible]apes sneak down from the upper floors, and on them, at any time day or night, can be found various male members of the inhabiting families, [illegible]ep on dirty mattresses, or [illegible] smoking their pipes as [illegible] gossip with other idlers above or below [illegible]

Children play in York street unnoticed and uncared for by their parents. [illegible] looking old men, rubbing their [illegible] hands, go leering about. Horr[illegible] [illegible]ld women scream from th[illegible] [illegible] Lloyd shuddered at the awful [illegible]tion that came [illegible] him at the [illegible] of so much fil[illegible] [illegible] tenements the girl or-

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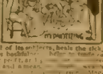

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dered the driver to stop, and, turning to Lloyd, said simply

"There is where your cousin lives. It's three flights up."

At the top of the stairs the girl turned sharply to the right and led the way down a narrow, dirty, and evil-smelling hall to a door at the extreme rear of the building. As they passed, frowsy women pushed their heads thru half-cracked doorways to catch a glimpse of the "swells." Dirty little children, their faces white and hard, followed them curiously.

The girl knocked at the door, and at a faint bidding pushed it open. Jack followed her into the room, closing the door behind him.

The room was small and divided by a curtain across one corner, which, raised to give more air, showed a cot covered by a cheap green quilt. On a bed at the other side of the room was an old, feeble man, weak and palsied, his hair snow-white, and on his face a strange, restless look. The rest of the room was bare, save for a small dirty rug at the side of the old man's bed, two broken kitchen chairs, a little table on which rested a two-burner gas-plate, and an upturned soap box on which were a cracked bowl and a tin pitcher of water.

The old man lifted himself peevishly as his visitors entered.

"What do you want?" he said, querulously. "Elsie, aren't there any chairs for the lady and gentleman?"

A girl, pale and emaciated from want and worry, arose from the bedside and drew aside the piece of cracked shade that covered the window, shutting out the light from the old man's eyes.

"It's Helen, father, Helen—and a gentleman."

The girl hesitated and looked questioningly at her friend. The girl from the red car stepped forward and put one of Elsie Cole's hands in that of Jack Lloyd

"Elsie," she said, "this is Jack Lloyd—your cousin. I have decided that it is best to tell him everything. I'm sure he is going to help us."

Elsie Cole's white face glowed with a warm red and she took a little step forward. "Oh, I'm so glad!" she said impulsively, and turning to the old man on the bed, she pushed Jack forward.

"Look, father. This is Jack Lloyd—you remember him—your nephew Jack—Aunt Margie's son."

For several moments the old man glared at the younger one. Then slowly he raised himself on his elbow

"What do you want here?" he demanded. "Is this some more of Colin's damnable work? Can't he let me die in peace?"

Jack was nonplused. He looked questioningly at the girl who had brought him there, but she was staring at the old man, who had lifted himself until he was sitting sidewise on the bed

A wild look had begun to grow in his eyes. The matted white hair fell down over his forehead, and the gray lips were drawn back into a snarl. The long and bony finger which he pointed at Jack shook as if with a palsy, and strange lights began to flash beneath his gray beetling brows. Elsie Cole ran to his side and fell on her knees.

"Why do you come here to torture me?" the old man snarled. "For fifty years I have borne the brunt of Colin's damnable plans and thievery. When we were boys together in school, he stole from me. My work obtained for him the answers that went on his papers, and when he was questioned about it he lied—lied and said that I had stolen them from him."

"There, there, father!" begged the young girl.

"Then when we grew up," the old man went on, working himself into a pitch of excitement, "he continued to scheme to get for himself the things that I did. The inventions that made him famous are mine—mine—mine. I studied and worked over them, year after year, and just when I came to the point of success, he, with his cursed money, would buy them from me—take them and pay me what he wanted to so that Elsie and I could only buy enough to live on. Then he would sell them—sell them for himself, you understand, and make his thousands."

"But father," said Elsie, "Jack has come to make restitution to us. Uncle Colin is dead, don't you understand? He's dead. He's left us all his money, and from now on we won't suffer any more. You're going away and get well. We're going to move away from this horrible place. We'll be rich, father, rich."

"Rich!" The old man snarled the word as if the bitterness of it was biting at his soul. "Rich! On Colin's stolen money? I'd rather die here in all this filth and want than touch a cent of it, altho it is mine by right. I've hated him all my life, and now that I'm dying he has fixed it so that he can torture me with offers of a fortune which he knows I shall not accept."

Gradually the old man had risen from the bed. His soiled nightdress hung on his emaciated figure. His hands were raised in the air like the talons of some gaunt and hungry buzzard. They shook from the force of his pent-up passion.

"I'm dying now," he screamed, "I'm dying now, inch by inch, and Colin has killed me! He's stealing my life, as he stole my inventions! But he shan't see me dependent on his money for the few hours that are left to me. I'd rather end it now than take a cent of it. I'd rather see Elsie dead and buried than to know that she would take it. Every cent of it is tainted! I hate every dollar of it, as I hated him who stole it from me."

"But, Uncle Hardy," protested Jack, stepping forward and gently urging the old man back to the bed, "surely you don't blame me for what Uncle Colin did in the past. All I know is that he has made it possible for Elsie to inherit his money, and I'm doing all in my power to see that she gets it. As it is, I don't know whether or not she can comply with the terms of the will."

"Then it isn't mine yet?" asked Elsie. Then, suddenly realizing that her hopes perhaps had been in vain, she burst into tears on the shoulder of her friend.

"I wanted so to get father away from here. I'm sure he will be better as soon as he gets some decent food and a clean place to live."

The old man had stopped his tirade, as Helen kept Elsie pressed close to her, comforting her softly

"What are the terms?" he asked, with the first real show of interest.

"Colin Cole's fortune of a million dollars is left to Elsie, provided that, of her own efforts, she shall, within a period of one year, earn for herself the sum of $10,000."

At this, the old man fell back on the bed, shaking his head impotently, while a fresh burst of sobs came from Elsie

"Oh, the cruelty of him," she moaned; "the bitter irony of it! He knew we were suffering and in want, and he wanted to play with us. Isn't there any way—any way to get the money? I don't care for myself—it's of father I'm thinking."

The old man lifted his sunken body and raised his gaunt hands above his head. There was the most intense hatred in his voice. As he listened, Jack Lloyd thought that never in his life had he seen so much bitterness displayed by any man. His eyes burned with a strange, unnatural light. They seemed like those of a madman, so wild and set they were. The whole body shook with passion.

"Curse him! Curse Colin Cole!" the old man shouted, with a shrill demoniacal voice. "All my life he tortured me, and now he comes back from the grave to torture me at my bedside. But in the next life I shall live for eternity to pay him back—with interest, interest, interest!"

The voice rose until it became an agonized shriek, and the old man, overcome by the violence of his emotion, fell back writhing on his bed

Up the steps came the clatter of footsteps, and Don Wilson burst into the room. For a moment he stared at the tableau—at the pretty girl in the black coat; at Elsie Cole, pale and emaciated; at Jack Lloyd, and at the odd figure of the gray old man shuddering on the bed. Then his instinct of a newspaper reporter asserted itself. Quickly he grasped the situation

"The story's [illegible]," he said and turning to the young girl, he asked, "Would you mind giving your name?"

"I suppose it's necessary," she replied. "It's Helen Palmer."

"Helen Palmer!" The newspaper man caught his breath. The name was that of the favorite young daughter of one of New York's multimillionaires. It would add much to the value of the story he was mapping out already in his mind. "It's lucky I got here when I did," he said. "Saw the red car by the merest accident where it was wrecked. Being told by one who overheard the order to your chauffeur that

(Continued on Page 17.)

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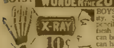

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We have the very watch you have been wanting [illegible] Model Elgins at a saving of a third to a half [illegible] in for good measure that you'll never miss the money. So no matter whether you are rich or poor, its all the same to us. Our little payments make your credit good and the volume of our business in all parts of the country, combined with big factory contracts, enables us to do better by you than any other watch or diamond house in the world.
$3 Chain Free If you open a watch account with us this month. We must sell [illegible] Elgin Watches this year. We have to do it to protect our factory contracts. That's more than 4,000 watches a month, nearly 200 a day, but we will do it. Yet do you know what this means to you? It means the Newest Models, the finest Elgins, at our prices—$12.75 to $26.50. It means that we have gone to rock-bottom [illegible] you Watch Bargains and throw in the astoundingly Easy Terms of
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Send No Money But write today. Send your name and address for the most Interesting Catalog in America. A catalog with a thousand illustrations [illegible] a Diamond, a Suit or Overcoat, a Bicycle [illegible] a Sewing Machine or Musical Instrument [illegible] at Rock-Bottom Prices without missing the money.
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HARRIS-GOAR CO. Dept. 1539 Kansas City, Mo.
[illegible] That Sells More Elgin Watches Than Any Other Firm in the World.

Classified Want Ads

Classified Want Ad Information

The rate for one insertion in Chicago Ledger and one insertion in The Saturday Blade is 30 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size of ad or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500 N. Dearborn St. CHICAGO, ILL.

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WOULD YOU LIKE A STEADY JOB clearing $30.00 weekly, with opportunity [illegible]

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AGENTS—BRAND NEW SPECIALTY—[illegible] sauce Pan with [illegible] different foods on [illegible] Lasts lifetime. $100 [illegible] end for our catalog [illegible] American Aluminum [illegible] Lemont, Ill.

BIG OPPORTUNITY FOR HONEST HUS[illegible] towns and country to learn a [illegible] become a district man [illegible] line club offers. Experi[illegible] sheet writers need ap[illegible]

AGENTS TO TRAVEL BY AUTOMOBILE TO [illegible] fast selling popular priced [illegible]. The greatest line on [illegible]

WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, FURNISH[illegible] $200.00 weekly operating our "New System Specialty Candy Factories," home anywhere. [illegible] dale Co., East Orange, N. J.

AGENTS MAKE LARGER PROFITS SELL[illegible] 325 Broadway, N. Y.

GREATEST OPPORTUNITY FOR A GOOD [illegible] "Billy Sunday" book. Experience unnecessary. [illegible]

LARGE MANUFACTURER WANTS REPRESENTATIVES to sell shirts, underwear, hosiery, dresses, waists, skirts, direct to homes. Write for free samples. Madison Mills, 586 Broadway, New York City

"STUARTS" ELECTRIC HAIR CURLERS curl hair in 30 minutes. Package con[illegible] 3 packages, 25c. Agents [illegible] 544 Jersey Ave., Eliza[illegible]

AGENTS—PAIR SILK HOSE FREE. STATE size and color. Beautiful line direct from mill. Good profits. Write today. Triplewear Mills, Dept. F, 112 So. 13th St., Philadelphia, Pa.

1916's SENSATION! 11 PIECE TOILET SET selling like wildfire at $1, with $1 Carving Set [illegible]! Enormous pro[illegible] "Tremendous hit" Engle [illegible] Write quick! Pierce Co., [illegible] M, Chicago.

YOUNG MAN, WOULD YOU ACCEPT A [illegible] rmade suit just for showing it to your [illegible] te Banner Tailoring Co., [illegible] and get beautiful samples, [illegible] derful offe[illegible]

FAST SELLING "KANTLEAK" RAINCOAT [illegible] in 5 days [illegible] r and col[illegible] rite today. [illegible] St., Dayton, Ohio

MAKE AND SELL YOUR OWN GOODS. [illegible] chemists. Manufac[illegible] Formula [illegible] Company, [illegible] n, D. C.

AGENTS—500% PROFIT; GOLD AND SILVER sign letters for store and office windows. [illegible] in put on. Write today for free samples. [illegible] allic Letter Co., 416 N. Clark, Chicago

WE PAY $36 A WEEK AND EXPENSES [illegible] ce poultry [illegible] Imperial Mfg. [illegible]

AGENTS—LIVE A NEW SOAP GAME THAT'S [illegible] sts. Sample [illegible] assian [illegible]

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REMNANT STORE, CINCINNATI, OHIO, [illegible] goods bargains on earth [illegible] keepers supplied.

$10.00 PER 1,000 ALLOWED DISTRIB[illegible] soap Samples. Pocket Soap Co., [illegible]

YOU CAN SELL OUR RAINCOATS. BIG commissions, free coat to good agents. Temple Raincoat Co., Templeton, Mass.

HELP WANTED

WILL ADVANCE EXPENSES AND PAY straight weekly salary of $18.00 to man or woman with fair education and good references. No canvassing. Staple line. Old established firm. G. M. Nichols, Philadelphia, Pa., Pepper Bldg.

MEN AND WOMEN WANTED FOR U. S. [illegible] Franklin [illegible]

$[illegible] FOR RELIABLE MAN OR WOMAN [illegible] free pkgs. Borax Powde[illegible] etc., in your town. No money or [illegible] 18 In[illegible]

WE PAY [illegible] EACH FOR FARMERS' [illegible] Sun, [illegible]

BE A DETECTIVES—EARN BIG [illegible] easy work. Write Captain Wagner, [illegible] gton Avenue, New York.

$[illegible] WEEKLY COLLECTING NAMES, IN[illegible] ns 10c. Returned if dissatisfied. [illegible] 7A, Baltimore, Md.

MALE HELP WANTED

CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS OPEN the way to good Government position. [illegible] can coach you by mail at small cost. [illegible] particulars free to any American citizen of eighteen or over. Write today for booklet CE 1034. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

FIREMEN AND BRAKEMEN: $100 MONTHLY, experience unnecessary, hundreds need[illegible]

WANTED—RAILWAY MAIL CLERKS, Clerk-carriers, and Rural Carriers. I con[illegible]

LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS—Earn $25 to $100 weekly. We can positively show you by mail how to increase your [illegible] free. Page Davis Co., Dept. [illegible], Page Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN FROM $150.00 to $300.00 per month, travel over the world. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

GOVERNMENT WANTS CLERKS. EXAM[illegible] April 12th. Sample [illegible] free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H117, [illegible], N. Y.

I WILL START YOU EARNING $4 DAILY at home silvering mirrors; free instructive [illegible] Dept. [illegible] Boston, Mass.

GOVERNMENT EXAMINATIONS—THOROUGH instruction, $5. Returned if not appointed. Particulars free. American Civil Service School, Washington, D. C.

BE A DETECTIVE; EARN $50-$100 WEEKLY; travel over the world. Experience unnecessary. American Foreign Detective Institute, 115 Chemical, St. Louis.

GOVERNMENT WANTS CLERKS. EXAMINATIONS everywhere April 12th. Sample questions free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H28, Rochester, N. Y.

BE AN AUTOMOBILE EXPERT IN SIX weeks. Our big book tells you how. Automobile Training School, 1062 Locust St., Kansas City, Mo.

GOVERNMENT FARMERS WANTED. $60 to $125 monthly. Free living quarters. Write Ozment, 68 F, St. [illegible]

SILVERING MIRRORS, PLATING TABLEWARE, auto-brass. Home booklet plans free. Clarence Sprinkle, Dept. 2, Marion, Ind.

FIREMEN, BRAKEMEN, ALL RAILROADS; $120 monthly. Railway Association, Dept. P 34, Brooklyn, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE. EARN $25 TO $75 weekly, see the world with expenses paid. Write Lamont, 412 Journal Bldg., Boston, Mass.

$18. WEEK PAID CHAUFFEURS. LEARN while earning. Sample lessons free. Franklin Institute, Dept. H 809, Rochester, N. Y.

FEMALE HELP WANTED

FREE TO ANY WOMAN, BEAUTIFUL 42-piece gold decorated dinner set for distributing only 3 doz. free cakes of Complexion Soap. No money or experience needed. B. W. Tyrrell Ward, 218 Institute Place, Chicago

REFINED LADIES WANTED TO INTRODUCE Priscilla Fabrics, Petticoats, Dresses, Hosiery in spare time. Successful new plan. Samples free. Fitzcharles Company, Dept. 93, Trenton, N. J.

LINCOLN LEARNED AT HOME. SO CAN [illegible] rths on shorthand course and get typewriter free. Stenogr[illegible] Institute, Box 617A, Leadville, Colo.

WOMEN TO SEW; MATERIAL PREPAID to your house. Plain sewing. No canvassing. Send stamped envelope for prices paid. Universal Co., Dept. 54, Phila., Pa.

FIVE BRIGHT, CAPABLE LADIES TO travel, demonstrate and sell dealers. $[illegible] to $50 per week. Railroad fare paid. Goodrich Drug Company, Dept. 85, Omaha, Neb.

OLD COINS WANTED

WILL PAY $750.00 CASH FOR $5 GOLD piece dated 1822 (without "In God We Trust"). $50.00 for 1853 half, without arrows, $5.00 to $50.00 cash for large cent 1799, etc. We pay cash premiums for all large cents, eagle cents, 2c pieces, etc., and all rare U. S. and foreign coins, bills and stamps to 1912. Thousands of rare coins wanted. Many valuable pieces are in circulation. Send 4c. Get our large Illustrated Coin Circular containing valuable information. It may mean much to [illegible] only have nothing to lose. [illegible] Numismatic Bank of Texas, Dept. [illegible] Texas

FARM LANDS

FERTILE VIRGINIA FARMS ALONG Chesapeake & Ohio Rwy., at $15 an acre up on easy terms. Mild climate, rich [illegible] dant rainfall, plentiful and cheap [illegible] nvenient to Eastern markets, also [illegible] and churches. Write for free illustrated book [illegible] on Southern farm homes. Address, K. T. [illegible] rawley, Indus. Agt., C. & O. Rwy., Room 1082, Richmond, Va.

FARMS FOR SALE

POOR MAN'S CHANCE—$5 DOWN $5 monthly buys 40 acres, productive land sunny south Missouri. Price $200.00. Box 425-S, Carthage, Mo.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$12.50 INVESTED MAY MAKE $1,000. GET warranty deed, also interest in co-operative [illegible]ell to be drilled near big gusher in field. [illegible]erms $1 cash, $1 monthly. Four lot combination $46. Particulars free. Triangle Oil Co., 407 Carter B[illegible]

$10 BUYS DEED TO LAND, ALSO INTER[illegible] may pay you $100 for [illegible] invested. P[illegible] $1 monthly. [illegible] information fr[illegible] 106 Union Bank [illegible]

CYPRESS PARK LOTS, ONLY $1 MONTHLY. Houston suburban district. Deep wa[illegible] ment in sight. Price [illegible]

EVERY READER OF THE LEDGER OUGHT to read these ads. Every week splendid [illegible] better yourself to buy, sell or exchange goods [illegible] are offered here.

NON-BREAKABLE LAMP CHIMNEYS AND Smokeless Burners are sure sellers. D. Finch's, Grand Rapids, Mich.

START FARMING $5 DAILY AT HOME [illegible] instructive booklet free. [illegible] D. C.

REAL ESTATE

TWENTY ACRES IN SAN JOAQUIN VAL[illegible] alfalfa with cows, pigs, poultry and bees will pay you [illegible] profits. Delightful climate, rich soil, good schools, churches, fine roads. Thrifty, hospitable neighbors. Write for free books. C. [illegible] grave s, Gen. Colonization Agent, AT& [illegible] Ry., 1929 Ry. Exch., Chicago

WISCONSIN FARM LANDS

LANDOLOGY, A MAGAZINE GIVING THE facts in regard to the land situation. Three months' trial subscription free. If for a home, or as an investment you are thinking of buying good farm lands, simply write me a letter marking it personal and say, "Mail me Landology and all particulars free." Address Lloyd M. Skinner, Gen'l Mgr., Skidmore Land Co., 26 Skidmore Bldg., Marinette, Wis.

FARMS WANTED

LET ME SELL YOUR FARM. BUYERS, send name, free list. Mohler, Monon Bldg., Chicago.

WANTED: DESCRIPTION-PRICE OF GOOD farm or fruit ranch for sale. O. O. Mattson, 15 Andrus Bldg., Minneapolis, Minn.

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$35.00 PROFIT NIGHTLY. SMALL CAPITAL starts you. No experience needed. We teach you the business. Catalog free. Atlas Moving Picture Company, Franklin Building, Chicago.

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PERSONAL

A LETTER TO DR. ROWE THE SPECIALIST will obtain his latest book on symptoms and cure of varicocele, stricture and urinary diseases. Every man should have it, postage 4 cts. Send today. Dr. Rowe, 112 N. Pearl St., Buffalo, N. Y.

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GUARANTEED WATCH OR GOLD PLATED [illegible] free to boys and girls for placing sample packet seeds with friends. Eckert [illegible] R-2 [illegible]

BICYCLE SUPPLIES

SAVE MONEY. BICYCLES, TIRES, SUP[illegible] Don't buy before getting our cata[illegible] Box 38, Lancaster, Pa.

INSECTS WANTED

SPEND VACATION, SPARE TIME, PROFITABLY—gathering butterflies, millers. Many kinds wanted for museums. I pay highest prices. Everybody. Send 2c stamp for [illegible] lars and 8-page folder. Sinclair, Box 244, D 90, Los Angeles, Cal.

PATENTS

PATENTS SECURED OR FEE RETURNED. Free patentabl[illegible] search and report. Send sketch and description of invention. Latest and most complete patent book ever published for free distribution. (Ninety pages.) George P. Kimmel, 260 Barrister Building, Washington, D. C.

WANTED, AN IDEA! WHO CAN THINK of some simple thing to paten[illegible] Protect your ideas, they may bring you wealth [illegible] for "Needed Inventions," "Patent Buyers," and "How to Get Your Patent and Your Money." Randolph & Co., Patent Attorneys, Dept. 174, Washington, D. C.

INVENT SOMETHING. YOUR IDEAS MAY bring wealth, our free book tells w[illegible] invent and how to obtain a patent, through our new credit system, write today. Waters & Co., 4276 Warder Bldg., Washington, D. C.

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THE PATENTOME IS FREE. AN EDUCATION in obtaining patents. Established 1865. [illegible] on & Son, Attorneys, 713 7th St., Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL—(Continued)

CUT THIS OUT QUICK AND MAIL IT TO me with your name and address within ten days from date of this paper and I will mail [illegible] mammoth collection of handsome half[illegible] descriptions [illegible] attracti[illegible] to write tod[illegible] quick as I c[illegible] n to hundreds of [illegible] to sixty, desir[illegible] lin to be worth $1,000 to [illegible] can furnish thousands [illegible] siring hu[illegible]nds. [illegible] red.) Write now [illegible] e as the best always [illegible] Allen Ward, B 20, [illegible]

SUFFERERS FROM NERVOUS, WEAK, run down conditions should take [illegible] They accomplish marvelous [illegible] his medicine has more rejuvenating, [illegible] force than has ever before been offe[illegible] receipt of this ad [illegible] I. Hood Co., proprie[illegible] [illegible] saparilla, Lowell, Mass. (Z. R.)

WEAK, NERVOUS, RUN DOWN MEN, RE[illegible] are specialists in chronic, [illegible] blood, kidney, bladder and private [illegible] Book symptom blank and advice [illegible] Dr. Meyers, 316 Nicollet Ave., [illegible] Minn.

SEX KNOWLEDGE MALE AND FEMALE described and illustrated, 276 pages of interest. By Dr. M. Ryan. Sent sealed plain [illegible] New York

LEAP YEAR SPECIALS FOR LONELY PEOPLE. Join friendly correspondence club. Send ten cents for magazine containing let[illegible] Dept. W, Grand Rapids, Mich.

TOBACCO HABIT, ANY FORM, BANISHED in few days by an old reliable remedy, highly recommended. Send $3 for full treatment. L. W. Davis, Latta, S. C.

STOP TOBACCO WITHOUT HARMFUL [illegible] pany, Dept. A, Houston, Texas

MARRY RICH—BIG LIST OF DESCRIPTIONS and photos of congenial people with [illegible] FREE [illegible] Cor. Club, Grayslake, Illinois.

MARRY — FREE PHOTOS, BEAUTIFUL ladies; descriptions and directory; pay when married. New Plan Co., Dept. 21, Kansas City, Mo.

MARRY—MARRIAGE DIRECTORY WITH photos and description free. Pay when married. The Exchange, Dept. 28, Kansas City, Mo.

LOVERS, SEND ONLY 20 CENTS, FOR $1.75 packages Patented Lovine Sachet. Real thing. Guaranteed. Never fails. Union, Box 100, Palatine, Ill.

MARRIAGES—ALL CLASSES, NATIONALITIES, ages, rich and poor, are quickly mediated thru Kuehl, St. Paul, Minn. Send 10c for particulars.

MY LADY BEAUTIFUL AT BATH. TWO nature poses, 10c. Curtis Co., Terre Haute, Indiana.

TWO STUNNING PICTURES OF FEMALE loveliness at bath, 10c. Hoosier Co., Terre Haute, Ind.

HAVE SWEETHEARTS EVERYWHERE. Receive letters from every place. Membership 10c. Hoosier Club, Terre Haute, Indiana.

MISS MERRY WIDOW BEFORE THE [illegible] poses 10c. Pen Co., Terre Haute, Ind.

LITTLE MISS MABLE IN TWO NATURE poses, 10c. Pendergast Co., Terre Haute, Indiana.

10,000 MEMBERS WISH TO CORRESPOND with you. Membership 10c. Curtis Club, Terre Haute, Indiana.

LOVERS' SACHET WINS YOUR SWEETHEART without delay. Powder and its "SECRET" 25c. Britt's, Stone St., Newark, N. J.

"WEDDING BELLS" BEST MARRIAGE paper published. Send 10c. H. J. Teeple, Publisher, Decatur, Indiana.

GET MARRIED—BEST MATRIMONIAL paper published. Mailed free. The Correspondent, Toledo, Ohio.

FUTURE TOLD—10c BIRTHDATE. SATISFACTION guaranteed. Florence Edwards, 205 S. La Salle St., Dept. A, Chicago.

GET MARRIED; LARGEST MATRIMONIAL magazine published. Mailed free. H. Jahn, St. Paul, Minn.

EXCHANGE CARDS, LETTERS, PHOTOS with pretty girls; send 10c. Jolly Card Exchange, Decatur, Indiana.

FUTURE AND PAST TOLD. SEND 10c and birth date. James Smith, 326 Madison St., Chicago

MARRY RICH—WRITE ME. CLUB IS BEST plan. Particulars for stamp. Oro Co., LeRoy, Mich.

100 BATHING BEACH GIRLS, IN ASSORTED, bewitching poses, 10c. Wayne, D-3348 Lowe Ave., Chicago.

FROM BALLROOM TO HELL. A GREAT book. Startling truths revealed. Price 25c. Enterprise, E-3348 Lowe Ave., Chicago

MARRY RICH—HUNDREDS ANXIOUS TO marry. Descriptions and photos free. E Unity, Grand Rapids, [illegible]

LOVERS' PERFUME POWDER. SECRET and full directions, one dime. Scientific Extract Co., Akron, Ohio.

MARRIAGE PAPER: HIGHEST CHARACTER, sealed, send 10c. B. W. Love, Box 1616, Denver, Colo.

BIG MAIL FREE—NAME LISTED, 30,000 circulation, also magazine one year. Digest, Grand Rapids, [illegible]

LADIES: SECRETS YOU NEED FREE. Send today for information. Welch Medicine Co., Jacksonville, Fla.

LONELY YOUNG MAN AGE 25 WOULD like to marry. Address Andrew Savola, Hebard, Mohawk, Mich.

MARRY—SEND 5c FOR COPY CUPID'S Pathfinder. 5943 Calumet Ave., Chicago. Many rich women seek marriage.

MATRIMONIALLY INCLINED? CORRE[illegible] addresses and descrip[illegible] [illegible] led, 12c. Henry Mallon, Box 167, Chicago.

CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

BOOKS

"FROM THE BALL ROOM TO HELL" mailed anywhere, 25c. L. E. Muncy, 136 E. Pleasant Ave., A, Syracuse, N. Y.

MEDICAL

CONSTIPATION SUFFERERS — JASTCO Constipation Cure will afford you permanent relief. Treatment three dollars. Guaranteed under Pure Food and Drugs Act. Alamo Medical Laboratories, Dept. C, San Antonio, Texas.

ARE YOU CONSTIPATED? SEND 2c STAMP for Instructions how to restore the bowels to their normal functions. Dr. Ogden, Rectal Specialist, 1955 Leland Ave., Chicago.

THESE WANT ADS CHANGE EACH WEEK

New offers come and go—old offers change—something new and different in each issue.

READ THEM THIS WEEK AND OFTEN

Colin Cole's Million.

(Continued From Page 15.)

you were going to York street, Brooklyn, I caught a taxi and came at once. Who earns the $5,000 reward?"

"Elsie, of course," said Miss Palmer. "She gives herself up."

"That remains to be decided," said Jack, with a peculiar expression on his face. "I shall have to ask you all to come to my office. There are some details yet to be settled."

The two taxis were still waiting downstairs, and after they had made arrangements with one of the women in the building to stay with old Hardy Cole, the four got into them and rushed away to Jack Lloyd's office.

CHAPTER XL.

AT A huge office building in lower Broadway the taxis stopped at Lloyd's bidding, and the little group passed thru the entrance and into one of the battery of elevators. At the tenth floor they got out, and going around a wing of the building, were admitted by Jack into a suite of offices thru a private door leading into the hall. Lloyd walked to the two doors leading to rooms on either side of the office and carefully locked them. After this he turned to the others and suggested that they be seated.

Standing with his back to his flat-topped desk and facing his small audience, he began to spea.

"Before we go into this matter further," he said, "I think it is due to all of you to know that the disposal of the estate of Colin Cole is not entirely in my hands. Owing to the peculiar provisions of Mr. Cole's will, certain formalities must be complied with, among them the provision requiring Elsie to earn $10,000 during a period of one year by her own efforts. I think I have a plan whereby that may be done. But first I must ask Miss Palmer to tell us her connection with this ca[illegible]

"My connection is simply that of a friend of Elsie's," said Miss Palmer. "Eight years ago Elsie came to work for us as my maid. She was sent by an employment agency, who recommended her highly, altho they refused to tell us anything of her past beyond that she had never worked before. Altho Elsie was my maid, I soon saw that she was of good birth, and we quickly became more friends than mistress and employe. Shortly after Elsie came to us she asked if father would give her father some work to do in his garden, and in that way Mr. Cole also entered our employ. A year ago Mr. Cole became ill, and Elsie was forced to take her savings and devote them to caring for her father. They left our employ, and for a long time we heard nothing of them. When we found them again they were in utter want, but Elsie had been too proud to come to us for help. We found them living in York street, Brooklyn, the place you saw today.

"Mr. Cole's condition was very serious, and I was fortunately able to help Elsie care for him. To do this I made frequent visits to the tenement in York street, begging Elsie all the time to allow us to care for her and her father and remove him to some better place. But to this Elsie would not listen.

"Then, one day when returning from Elsie's, I met Mr. Lloyd under the peculiar circumstances of which you all know. Elsie had told me of her uncle and his peculiarities, and immediately I felt that he must have died leaving a fortune which in some way was about to slip from Elsie's grasp. Frankly, Mr. Lloyd, I did not believe your story. I thought that you were in a plot to secure what money Mr. Colin Cole had left Elsie, and I determined to prevent your doing so if possible. The notoriety the newspapers gave the whole matter, however, made it hard for me, and the provision that Elsie earn $10,000 of her own efforts in one year made success seem almost impossible. I had almost determined to seek you out and lay the whole matter before you, asking your pity on Elsie and her poor father, when that automobile accident occurred this morning, and Providence took the matter out of my hands.

"Elsie was always trying to induce me to telephone you to come to us. She felt certain that you were honest in your good will toward her, but Mr. Cole refused to have anything to do with you or Mr. Colin Cole's legacy.

"Once, when he was feeling better, we took him to ride. At a drug store we got out to telephone you, but he must have suspected us. He followed us inside, and interrupted Elsie just as she had got you over the wire. That was the last opportunity he gave us to reach you."

"And do you believe now that I am in earnest in saying that Elsie shall have her share of Colin Cole's estate if I can obtain it for her?"

"I do believe that now, Mr. Lloyd," the girl said frankly, "and I beg your pardon for doing you an injustice. I'm sorry."

For answer, Jack went to one of the doors leading into another room, unlocked it, and opened it. Thru it came an odd figure. A little old man, bent and tottering, with long white hair and great shaggy white eyebrows, shuffled into the room leaning on a cane. For a moment he looked at the assembled group, peering at each in turn, then with an odd little croak stumbled over to Elsie Cole and held out his arms.

"Elsie! My little niece!" he said. "Don't you know me? I'm your Uncle Colin."

The girl stared at him in terror for a moment, then slowly her face went red, her eyes filled with tears, and sinking back into her chair she burst into a spasm of sobbing. The old man stood before her, shaking his head slowly from side to side, seemingly frightened by the violence of her grief. In a helpless way he turned to Lloyd.

"A chair, Jack. Get me a chair."

He slid into it, when Jack brought one for him, and turned feebly to Jack.

"Tell her, boy. I'm quite overcome." He straightened a little and put his hand over his heart. "I think this joy is too much for me to bear. Did you find Hardy? Tell me, quick! Is he [illegible]ive?"

"He's alive, Uncle Colin, but [illegible]"

The old man passed a shaking hand over his face. "I know. I feared it all the time. His mind?" he asked, with a [illegible] inflection.

"Yes," Jack replied.

"Poor, poor Hardy!" said the old man, and buried his face in his hands.

"You can understand," said Jack to his friends, "what this means to Uncle Colin, after he has searched for his brother for eight years only to find him as you saw him today—insane."

"Insane?" asked Miss Palmer, incredulously.

"Yes," Jack replied softly. "He was insane years ago when he left home and went to work in your father's garden. Uncle Colin knew it at the time, and exhausted every means to find him. He has had detectives searching for him ever since he went away with Elsie, but without success until today.

"The first signs of Uncle Hardy's insanity came when he conceived the idea that Uncle Colin was trying to steal his inventions. As a matter of fact, Uncle Hardy lost his mind from overwork on a plan of an invention that would have revolutionized the method of color printing. Uncle Colin's inventions were along entirely different lines. He is an inventor of electrical appliances.

"When Uncle Colin's search for his brother, whom he has always loved dearly, proved unsuccessful, he gave up his home at Colinwood and came to New York, where I was practicing law. Here we conceived the plan to resort to publicity to find Elsie and her father, as our detectives had traced them to this city, and we felt certain they were here. But all our efforts to get the desired publicity were in vain, until I hit upon the plan of sailing the dirigible up Broadway."

"But why the story of the will?" asked Miss Palmer.

"That we thought necessary because of Uncle Hardy's peculiar hallucination. We knew he would never consent to seeing Uncle Colin again, and that any effort of his to provide for his brother would be repulsed. It was only the story of Uncle Colin's death, we decided, that would bring Uncle Hardy to make known his whereabouts. What we thought were impossible provisions were put into the fake will to force Elsie to come to us if she really was in want."

"Fortunately your plan was successful, and only because the conditions were impossible," said Helen. "We were forced by that fact to make ourselves known."

"But they aren't impossible," laughed Jack. From his desk he took up several letters. "Here are vaudeville contracts for me that would take care of the $15,000 for my part, and there is a $5,000 reward at The World waiting for Elsie, if she claims it. I'm quite sure her own story would bring another $5,000 from a newspaper syndicate. With the notoriety we've had, there wouldn't be much trouble for Elsie to get her $10,000."

Old Colin arose from his seat and lifted Elsie to her feet.

"Come, my child," he said gently, "take me to Hardy. All your suffering

(Continued on Page [illegible])

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Chicago Ledger

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GENTLE JABS

Folly and failure roost on the same perch.

Nothing else is quite so sure as one's finish.

A loud gong may call one to a poor dinner.

Warm weather is the best substitute for coal.

Gold handled by a dentist is always at a premium.

A woman's head is usually stronger than her arm.

High C is best attained by treading on a cat's tail.

It takes a silly woman to make a fool of a smart man.

At the age of 21 a man has more [illegible] than ideas.

The true secret of feminine beauty is to be born pretty.

It matters not that the world is round if you are on the square.

About the only satisfaction most married women have is they are not spinsters.

If a leap year girl has tact she can make her victim believe he did the proposing.

It's easier to induce two hearts to beat as one than it is to induce two mouths to eat that way.

But a woman seldom sees the cloven hoof of a man until after she gets a whiff of his cloven breath.

The only excuse some people have for marrying is that the woman wants a home and the man wants a servant.

It is harder for some men to slip upstairs at 2 a. m. than it is for them to slip down after they get half-way up.

The only safe way to contest a man's will is to wait until the undertaker gets thru with him, then hire a lawyer.

Sometimes the world thinks a man wise simply because he doesn't make [illegible] that he has nothing to say.

Some business men fail because they waste their time in fooling with trifles that they could hire a boy to attend to for $3 a week.

It has been said that the darkest cloud has a silver lining, but the average man prefers his clouds gold-lined and of a less somber hue.

[illegible] have noticed that a man who [illegible] isn't worth living is the first to make an effort to save himself when danger threatens.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Fashion has a particular weakness for the three-quarter length coat.

The uneven hem still prevails. Often it is shorter in front than in back, and it is still scalloped.

In a plaited skirt a plain front and back panel is often combined with a plain, carefully fitted yoke.

Afternoon frocks may be a combination of light and heavy material, but the self color [illegible] followed thruout.

You may [illegible] up grandmother's gay plaid shawl into a fashionable separate skirt with fringe around the bottom. Such a skirt is good with an odd sports coat.

Gathering up all the straws that show the wind, it is probable that the street skirts will grow longer as the season advances. They may not descend to the instep, but they will reach the ankle. The extreme shortness of skirts for the last six months has been so overemphasized in a cheap way that many women prefer to go against the majority than be with it.

❧

RECIPES.

LEMON SAUCE.—One cupful of sugar, half a cupful of butter, one egg beaten light, one lemon, juice and grated rind, half a cupful of boiling water. Put it in an enamel ware basin and thicken over steam.

SWISS STEAK.—Get one pound of the bottom of the round, cut thick, an inch and a half at least. Wash and wipe it. Put a spoonful or more of flour on it and pound it to a pulp. Turn over and continue till it is all reduced to a pulp. Heat your iron saucepan hot, put in a spoonful of butter and put in your steak. Brown quickly on both sides, then put on salt and pepper, put in a little hot water and cover it. Let it simmer about two hours, turning it occasionally, and put in water as it needs, only a little at a time. It should be tender and of fine flavor.

GRAPEFRUIT TRIFLE.—Remove the fruit from two large firm grapefruit; spread some macaroons with apricot jam and line the bottom of the compote with them, cover them with a layer of the grapefruit pulp and sprinkle all with powdered sugar. Make the boiled custard and when it is chilled color it a delicate green with the Breton coloring, heap the top with the whip and garnish the top with candied mint leaves and candied violets.

❧

NEEDLEWORK.

When sewing buttons on a little child's dress, run a tape down the wrong side first, then sew on buttons the desired distance apart. You will find the buttons will never tear away from the goods, no matter how hard wear it is given.

One of the quickest ways to sew lace on a garment is to crease the hem exactly as it is to be, then unfold it and stitch the lace just a trifle above the crease on the wrong side. The hem is turned again and sewed in place. In this way the stitching of the lace does not show on the right side and is not easily ripped.

An easy way to do quilting is to place the lining on the floor perfectly smooth. After the padding and top have been laid on, run lines of long stitches thru the quilt about twelve inches apart. Carefully lift it to the sewing machine, letting all the weight rest on chairs to prevent straining the machine needle. Lengthen the stitch on the machine and quilt in lines three inches apart. Cross lines can be run and thus make squares or diamonds if so desired. The work is done more quickly and will last longer than when done by the old method of quilting.

❧

HEALTH NOTES.

To use the dental floss or waxed silk thread and quill toothpicks is recommended for the removal of food from between teeth that are slightly separated. This practice should follow each meal.

A stye on the eye is not only sufficient to spoil any one's good looks, but it is decidedly painful besides. To cure this disfigurement make a poultice of fresh tea leaves moistened with water and apply to the stye.

Probably more character is shown by the eyes and mouth than the other features of the face, and yet the most beautiful of mouths will be destroyed by uncared-for teeth and an offensive breath, for the latter is sure to follow if the teeth are not in the best of condition.

Don't be afraid of letting children get dirty. Dress them for it. Girls should be put into trousers like a boy instead of skirts. Trousers would be much more modest than the ordinary dress of girls 3 years of age. Their skirts generally hardly reach down to their knees and their legs are bare, or if not bare they are clad in such a way that they are certainly not anything like as modestly clothed as they would be if they had on pantaloons like the boys—little roustabout clothes—and just turned loose to play in the dirt to make mud pies, to get down and wallow in the earth. There is no danger in this. The soil is clean dirt, so to speak; there is nothing pernicious in it.

❧

HEALTH NOTES.

A doctor expresses the opinion that nine times out of ten the woman who nags is tired. One time out of ten she is hateful.

Keep a watchful eye on the children's school lunch; if they have good, nourishing lunches they will be better able to stand the strain of school work.

Warm underclothing is an essential to health. Sufferers from chilblains on the feet have found the wearing of good cotton stockings, as opposed to woolen, most beneficial, especially if they have to do a great deal of walking.

People who are "run down" are particularly subject to chilblains, in cold weather, so it is essential to keep fit. Have a tonic made up if you feel below par. Eat good, nourishing food.

When you are tired and nervous, a good rubbing all over the body with the lotion here given will be very restful. Lie quietly in bed after the rubbing for half an hour and you will then feel quite equal to taking up the daily tasks again. Here is the lotion: Diluted alcohol, six ounces; cologne water, six ounces; tannin, ten grains.

❧

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

To remove marks on the table caused by hot dishes spread a thin paste made of salad oil and salt on the spots, leave for an hour or so, and then rub off with a soft cloth.

Water in which macaroni has been cooked will make excellent starch to use for dainty lingerie garments or fine ginghams.

Among the cleaning agents there are two recent additions to the list that are well worth while; one is the copper wire dishcloth, which comes in three sizes for the cleaning of pots and pans and is much more effective than the chain cloths, as it does not chip or crack the enamel. The other is steel wool; this comes in a roll, and a little bit pulled off, which has the feeling of a bunch of horsehair and looks not unlike it, will clean enamel ware perfectly simply by rubbing it over the surface. It may also be used for brasses and glassware. Use with it a nonalkali soap, if any, and always rinse the article and polish with a dry cloth after it is cleaned.

❧

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Glen, the Boy Pilot

Or, Rafting on the Muskalong

By Milford Merrill

Author of "Riding the Logs," etc.

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CHAPTER XIII.

"WHAT is the trouble, Eph?" queried Glen, greatly disturbed over seeing this man back in Old Woman's Bend many hours before he was due.

"Satan to pay and no pitch hot, boy!"

"You have met with bad luck?"

"You bet yer life, sir. Our rafts ran into a big log-jam at Maple Top, and I'm afeared the whole caboodle has been smashed by this time!"

"But," protested Glen, "you surely didn't leave the rafts?"

"It's this way, boss," explained big Eph. "You know how sharp the river twists at Maple Top. Well, when we rounded that we were in the face of a big jam of logs that completely blocked the river. We came onto the jam so unexpected like that we hadn't time to snub, so ran full tilt into the jam. Before I could git round to call to Tim, his raft was onto the jam, too, and there they are now, piled up in nice shape. Them dogs at the mouth orter be shot for blockin' the river——"

"Eph Eckles," cried Glen, sternly, "you do not mean to tell me that you left those shingle rafts unfastened against a jam of logs in the river? The other men are there on guard?"

"No, I reckon they ain't, sir."

"Tim Brown wouldn't desert his post."

"No, he didn't. He stayed; the rest of us come away; but Lord, sir! he couldn't do nothin' alone, and I told him so."

"Eph Eckles, you're a big fool!"

The words came fierce and hot from the heart of the boy raftsman. He could not repress them from the fact that his lumber crew had deserted their rafts in time of supreme danger.

"Wal, boss, I reckoned you could make them Oxbow fellers pay all damage," grunted Eckles, hanging his head shamefacedly before the flashing eyes of Glen Dayton.

The latter knew full well that should the jam of logs break before men could be sent to guard the rafts the shingles would be ground among the logs and most of them lost.

Turning his back upon the big raftsman who had so egregiously blundered, Glen hastened to arouse the inmates of the boarding-house. Among them was Jack Adams, who had been ill since the previous day. He, however, was roused to instant action over the news.

"By George, what a parcel of idots!" exclaimed Jack, as he slipped hurriedly into his trousers.

"Stay where you are, Jack," commanded Glen, when he saw his stalwart boy helper stagger half-dressed into the hall. "We want men who can work, not sick boys."

"Don't insult me, Glen," sent back wide Jack. "I ain't half as sick as I pretended. Wanted to lay off a day or two was all. I know what's got to be done. If we don't get to the rafts before the jam breaks, good-by shingles. Get out the teams, Glen; I'll see that the men are on hand."

The boy raftsman hastened to act upon Jack's suggestion, and when he had two teams attached to wagons drawn up before the house, the men were ready to climb aboard.

Jack had gone to arouse Mr. Dedham. Glen would have protested had he known, since he knew that the millowner could in no way help matters, and it seemed hardly necessary to alarm him till the damage was assured.

Glen saddled Black Jim. He sprang to the back of the spirited animal and led the way down the river road toward the mouth.

Jack aroused Mr. Dedham, briefly told him the facts, after which man and boy followed the rest in a buckboard, the only sort of vehicle resembling a carriage at Old Woman's Bend, and this was the especial property of the great lumberman millowner.

"If I only had my horn I'd make things jingle," declared Jack.

"No matter," growled his companion. "The less noise the better. Some men are fools; Glen is one."

"What's that, sir?" from wide Jack Adams.

"I say Glen Dayton is a fool. If my shingles are lost he shall stand the expense. I trusted him, and he trusted a parcel of no-account Tom, Dick, and Harrys, who do not know B from bull's foot."

Jack sat silent, grating his teeth. He believed that his good friend Glen had made a mistake, but he did not relish hearing some one else speak harshly of him. He knew also that Andrew Jackson Dedham was a hard man, and that Glen would receive no favors at his hands.

When Jack and the millowner reached the bend where the log-jam was said to be, the river ran free as far as the eye could reach: the jam had gone down during the night! It was a sight that troubled Jack as well as the millowner. He had driven past the loaded wagons, and save for Glen was the first on the scene.

"This shows what a fool Eckles was!" growled Dedham. "Had he stuck to his raft a few hours all would have been well. Now everything has gone to Hades!"

Glen Dayton was nowhere to be seen. He had gone on in pursuit of the shingle rafts. Morning had come, and a heavy fog from the river was lifting as the heavily loaded wagons came to a halt on the bluff overlooking the tortuous Muskalong.

"It looks bad," agreed Jack.

Mr. Dedham wasted little time at this point, but continued his drive down the river road. At the Sand Flats he gave his animals into the keeping of a man who ran a roadside inn, making his way on foot to the river side.

Glen was ahead of them. He had caught up with the still moving jam, which proved to have been only a temporary stoppage of the river. Here he found one raft badly broken up, many of the bunches of shingles floating in irregular masses among the logs. One raft was almost intact with the sturdy Tim Brown working desperately alone to save the shingles.

"If I'd had a man with me I might have done something," explained Tim, when Glen came clambering over the floating logs to his aid. "That Eph Eckles called me a fool for sticking, but I wouldn't quit while I had a spot to stand on. It's a sorry job anyhow, Glen."

The boy raftsman grasped Tim's hand warmly.

"You are a brave fellow, Tim," he cried. "Would to Heaven the others had been like you."

Every effort was put forward by Glen and his men to save the shingles. The logs continued on their way to the mouth of the river, carrying with them the loose shingle bunches from the destroyed raft. The other one was snubbed to the bank, its twisted boomsticks repaired, the larger part of its bulk saved.

Glen trusted Tim to come on later with the repaired raft, while he, Mr. Dedham, and a crew of men kept with the floating logs, drawing out all the shingles they could with hooks and hands.

Jack Adams kept along with the crew, altho Glen tried to have him return to Old Woman's Bend.

"I'm all right, Glen," declared Jack, whose pale face seemed to belie his cheerful words. "If I only had my horn now, I'd make the eagle scream."

"What good would that do?"

"It would give the Oxbow outlaws fair warning."

"Warning of what, Jack?"

"Of the coming upon their heads of just retribution for all their past and present iniquities. You don't imagine for a minute that Andrew Jackson'll stand for the loss of his shingles, Glen?"

"I'm afraid he can't help himself."

"I think he'll do a good job of trying, anyhow."

"I can't say that I think the Oxbow fellows were wholly to blame for the present trouble. If my men had stuck to their rafts a few hours all would have been well. It would be hard to prove anything against the combined millions at the mouth."

"I wonder what old John A. Beaver would do in like circumstances."

"John A. is a mighty smart man," admitted Glen, "but even he couldn't make headway against the Oxbow Booming Company."

The fight to save the shingles lasted for a week, at the end of which time a

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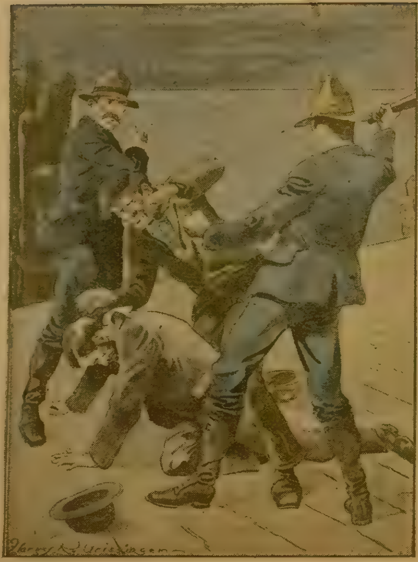

Glen was upon the two villains.

tired, draggled crew of men drew up at the Waterside Hotel at Oxbow and took stock of the situation.

Andrew Jackson Dedham was with them, as were also Glen and Jack. The latter had not complained once during the hustle and strenuous efforts put forth to save the shingles. It had been a hard fight, and the battle was now [illegible]

Glen sat at a table figuring. Not far away sat Mr. Dedham, smoking a black cigar, looking tired and solemn

"Well, boy," he remarked, as Glen ceased figuring and raised his head.

"I find that we have lost in the lake about 140,000 shingles, Mr. Dedham."

"Humph!"

The big lumberman smoked gloomily. Presently he knocked the ash from his cigar, rising to his feet. He strode into the open air without another word. Glen seemed troubled. Jack drew a relieved breath, got to his feet, and turned a cartwheel across the floor. Then he walked about the room on his hands, heels elevated.

"There, old chap," he cried, as he came to a proper position once more, "you can't say that I am not all right!"

"No, Jack," agreed the other, "you'd come up smiling if the poles of the earth blew off. I like your grit——"

"And to think we didn't lose all the shingles is a comfort. I hope old Andrew'll send the bill to Shedd Weatherby with a demand for immediate settlement."

"I don't think he will do that."

"He ought to, anyhow."

Glen's face wore a troubled expression as he went to his room that night at the hotel. Early the next morning, after a good night's rest, the boy raftsman galloped back to Old Woman's Bend on the back of Black Jim. Jack and the rest followed at their leisure.

Immediately after his arrival Glen was summoned to the presence of his employer. Mr. Dedham was as solemn as an owl as he nodded to a chair.

"I have figured out the loss on those shingles, Mr. Dayton," said he, "and I find it amounts to $560, which I shall of course expect you to pay."

CHAPTER XIV.

GLEN had been expecting something like this.

"Do you think it just for me to stand all the loss, Mr. Dedham?" questioned the boy. "I had thought that we might divide the expense between us, and some time, perhaps, when this river blockade is settled as it must be, we will get a refunding of our money."

"No, sir, no, sir, there's nothing to that!" snapped A. J. Dedham, crustily. "Money counts in this world. Those Oxbow fellows have got the whiprow on us up the stream, and there'll never be any settlement that don't give them the butt end of the game. I think it is up to you to make this loss good from the fact that you are to blame for its happening."

"Perhaps I am," assented Glen.

He did not feel disposed to argue the [illegible] He had engaged to raft all of the millowner's lumber and shingles. In the discharge of this duty a considerable loss had been incurred. Strictly speaking, he, Glen, could be held for it. However, the amount would seriously cripple him, and for a time he saw anything but a silver lining to his cloud.

He now called to mind what his aunt had told him about the risks to be encountered in the rafting business; also that Dedham was not the best man in the world with whom to do business.

His mind reverted to that sum of money, so far left untouched in the Oxbow savings bank—the money that had been loaned to him by the generous hermit of Yellow Swamp. He could borrow that if necessity called, and with this thought in mind he turned and left the presence of the millowner.

Somehow Glen found this man Dedham anything but an agreeable person to work for, and he was glad that he had contracted with him for only the one season. When this was over he would seek a less exacting employer.

"I'll be my own boss sometime," mused the young raftsman, as he bent his steps toward the dock where men of his were still at work making new rafts as tho nothing had happened.

Odd Jack Adams was standing at one side squinting at the sun, now going under a cloud.

"You've had it out with his nibs, I take it," said Jack, grinning.

"Why do you think so, Jack?"

"Because you look as sober as a judge."

"I hope you don't think all judges are sober, Jack?"

"Aren't they?"

"Far from it," and Glen smiled, trying to appear cheerful. "The ablest judge I ever saw had frequently to be locked up till he got sober, that he might sit on the bench. It was his lack of sobriety that kept him down. He hadn't a peer in the State of Michigan, and would have adorned a seat in the United States Senate or on the Supreme Bench but for his love of liquor."

"Queer guy, wasn't he?"

"I am not so sure about that."

"I think a man must be queer, or queered, who has the ability to fill such a high pinnacle as justice of the Supreme Bench, if he allows a taste for strong drink to steal away his brains and make a wreck of his life."

"The man I mention did all this despite the fact of his great ability," affirmed Glen, as he walked up the dock to look after the rafters.

"Say, Glen, didn't it turn out as I said it would?"

Jack Adams followed his friend, forcing his question.

"Quite as you predicted, Jack," agreed Glen.

"If you could only get in with John A. Beaver of Wenago. Ah, there's the man for you, my boy—every inch a man and a scholar!"

"No doubt of it, Jack."

And then the two boys separated to go about the work assigned to each.

The day wore on. That night Jack saw Mr. Dedham again.

"It is plain that you are dissatisfied with my work, sir," said the boy raftsman, who had been thinking deeply during the day.

"Who said I am?" demanded the millowner gruffly

"Your actions speak it, Mr. Dedham."

"Well, after all that has happened can you blame me, Glen?"

"I am not blaming you, sir. Evidently you feel that you can do this rafting of lumber better than I: therefore I tender my resignation, here and now. I ask for an immediate acceptance of the same."

Glen drew himself up, facing the elderly millowner without flinching under the stern gaze of the cold, crafty eyes.

"Sho! What put such nonsense into your head, Glen Dayton?" uttered Andrew Jackson Dedham, the moment he could recover from his surprise.

"It isn't nonsense, sir. I mean every word of it. After today you will please conduct your own rafting——"

"Oh, no, I shan't," said the millowner, with a bland smile. "You agreed to put in the whole season rafting lumber and shingles——"

"Yes, sir, but——"

"Not a 'but 'in this case, my boy, not a single 'but,'" broke forth the big man, still smiling. "We have a written contract to that effect, and I am going to hold you to it. Understand me, Glen. I have no hard feelings toward you with regard to this disaster down the river. That was one of the mishaps that come to every lumberman. Take it bravely, boy, like the hero you are. I'll stand by you if you stand by me. What do you say?"

"In that case I'll stick, of course."

After that the atmosphere seemed clarified. Glen had no thought of giving up his work if the millowner did not wish it. He could see now that he had really pleased the big man in more ways than one. Of course the loss of the shingles would about cut out all profit for Glen, yet he was brave enough not to cry quits, even if he ended up in the fall without a cent.

On the next trip down the river you may be sure that Jack and Glen were the pilots. They encountered no jam this time, and from that hour on there was less trouble with river blockades.

As the fall drew on, the nights became cold, even tho the days were pleasant, and the boy raftsman found it something of a hardship to keep the rafts going steadily. Eph Eckles did his duty with unfailing carefulness, trying evidently to make amends for his one break from duty that meant the loss of so many hard-earned dollars to his boy employer.

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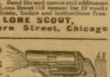
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an's Bend a wide berth. He feared the eccentric, muscular Jack Adams, who had demonstrated to the sinister lumberjack that he was easily his master.

In his various trips to Oxbow Glen frequently met Letty Walden, and occasionally Myra Weatherby. The latter, however, seemed to view the boy raftsman askance after that little unpleasantness on the street wherein Ned Somers, her father's bookkeeper, came out second best in his tussle with Jack Adams.

Glen's time, when he had any to spare from his duties, was spent with his Aunt Eunice, who appreciated his efforts to make good in the workaday world, and duly sympathized with his various mishaps.

"I'm gaining ground right along now, Aunt Eunice," declared the boy. "Altho I have met with some drawbacks this summer, I am sure all this is meant for my betterment; it is hardening me both physically and mentally to do things that are to count for very much in the future. Some day, aunt, you shall sit in the places of the most high. You shall ride in your carriage and outshine the Weatherbys and their ilk. You shall have everything that heart can wish for to make you happy. When that time arrives I'll be the happiest man in all America, for of course I will be a man by that time."

Mrs. Trescott smiled at the enthusiasm of her nephew. She knew how apt boys are sometimes to paint the future with roseate pictures. Gently stroking her laddie's dark hair the woman said:

"It's all right as it is, Glen. Riches do not bring happiness. You must not count too much on that. I have known people who have abundance of this world's goods to be very unhappy."

The sadness in her voice touched Glen, who turned to look into her sweet, calm face with a semi-suspicion that what she said might refer to something in her own life.

"Aunt Eunice," he cried in sudden earnestness, "tell me all about it, won't you, dear?"

"About what, Glen?"

"About yourself. You know you promised to do this once, but forgot about it afterward."

"I would rather not talk about myself, Glen," sighed Mrs. Trescott. "I am learning to be very happy here in this little home with you. You have been very good to me, dear laddie."

She bent and kissed his tanned cheek, a tear coursing down her cheek. His aunt was nice to look at, and not old; it grieved Glen to know that despite her remarks, she was not quite happy.

There was a story connected with her past life that she had never seen fit to confide to her nephew, nor would he insist on her speaking on a subject which she seemed to avoid.

It was Saturday night, and Glen was to remain at Oxbow over Sunday. Jack had gone to the hotel, refusing to burden his friends with his presence for the night. Glen walked out after supper, strolling up town. Oxbow in the summer and fall season was a busy place. Upward of forty sawmills filled the air with the sound of whirring machinery. Vessels loading with lumber invaded every dock. Altogether the city at the mouth of the Muskalong was one of unusual activity. Many of the better class of lumberjacks donned their best clothes of a Saturday night, and, with their girl friends, paraded the downtown streets.

The most pitiable thing about it all was the saloon interest that dominated almost whole streets, and within whose four walls many a poor workingman spent in one night of carousal all his summer's wages.

Glen was passing down a side street leading to the harbor, when, at the mouth of a dark alley, sounds of a scuffle greeted his ear. The boy would not have paused had not a voice, muffled, yet strenuous in its appeal, called for help.

Just at the corner of the building Glen saw a stout edging. Snatching this he stepped cautiously into the dimly lighted alleyway. He saw several forms struggling in the semi-gloom—two men upon one, whom they were dragging toward the edge of the dock not far distant.

"Shut his mouth, Dick!" growled a hoarse voice. "We'll dump his carcass into the lake!"

This gave Glen his cue for action. He at once darted forward, edging up, raised ready for quick, decisive work.

CHAPTER XV.

GLEN was upon the two villians, dealing sharp, lusty blows with his edging. The ruffians, startled from their work by an unexpected enemy, broke and fled. Next the wall of the tall building crouched the bleeding form of the victim of night prowlers.

"Are you badly hurt, sir?" asked Glen, as he bent over the prostrate man.

A groan alone answered.

Glen lifted the man, a slender, rather lightweight form, and led him to the light of the street. There was blood upon the man's face, and upon his graying beard.

"Simon Hethridge!" exclaimed the boy rescuer.

"They—they c-h-o-k-e-d me," came from the other gaspingly. "But they didn't get this."

The man drew a long leather wallet from his bosom, holding it up to the gaze of the other. "They—they meant to murder me, for—for my money."

"It isn't safe to carry money on one's person after night in Oxbow," said Glen, quickly. He was himself very careful about carrying money when going upon the street after night.

There were many low doggeries in the town; many hard pets from the dark holes of Chicago were met with at different times in the lakeshore lumbering towns. Glen was always on the alert for danger and had up to the present been remarkably lucky in escaping injury.

"Can you walk, Mr. Hethridge?" asked the boy.

"Keep this for me till I feel better, boy."

The speaker thrust his wallet into the hand of Glen.

The boy could do no less than he was requested. He shoved the wallet under his heavy coat into an inside pocket. He then led the man along the street, unhailed by any policeman, since these gentry were not on deck in time of need in Oxbow.

Glen led the way out of the business section into the quiet rural-like by-streets until he saw the glimmer of a light in his own cottage window. At this moment his companion, who seemed to have regained his strength, with sudden impatience threw off the hand of his boy rescuer.

"Where are you taking me?" he asked.

"Home with me, sir."

"Do you live with your parents?"

"I have no parents; I live with Aunt Eunice Trescott, sir."

"Ah, yes, you told me this once some time ago. I am forgetful. You will forgive me, Glen—you see I know your name. I can't go any farther with you now."

"Why not?"

"No reason that you would understand, boy," with a faint laugh.

"But you need a doctor——"

"Not for me. I am feeling fit as a bowstring. Those men choked me, bu used no deadly weapon. I am all right now. Good night, my boy, and may good luck go with you all the days of your life."

With that the eccentric old man hurried down the street. Glen watched him till he disappeared beyond a corner, after which he made his way slowly homeward. Once inside his own door Glen felt his hand touch a protuberance under his heavy coat.

"Mercy, the wallet!" ejaculated the boy.

And then he started to go out again. Mrs. Trescott called from the kitchen to know where he was going. She came into the front room, drying her hands on her blue check apron.

"I cannot wait to talk," cried the boy. "I must hurry and overtake Mr. Hethridge."

With that he dashed thru the door and was gone.

Mrs. Trescott looked startled.

"I wonder what possessed Glen," she murmured. However, she went back to

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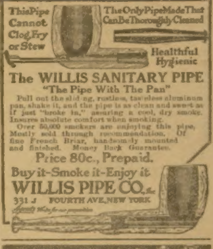
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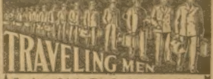
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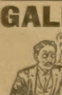
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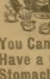
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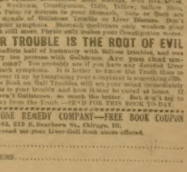
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her duties in the kitchen, dismissing more recent troubles from her mind.

"I didn't mean to keep the wallet," soliloquized Glen as he hurried to find the strange-acting hermit. He was puzzled to know what the strange man could be doing, wandering about the streets of Oxbow, with a well-filled wallet, not seeming to use ordinary precaution.

Hethridge had once told Glen that he had more money than he should ever be able to use. Evidently the queer fellow was rich. Doubtless his mind had been upset by some trouble. It did not seem to Glen safe for a man of this kind to wander about the world an easy prey to the skilled manipulators of finance, the low ruffians of the slums.

"He should be in some asylum for the feeble-minded," thought the boy.

Glen searched the downtown districts without finding the man he sought. He repaired to the hotel and interviewed Jack Adams.

"Can't do anything about it, of course," declared Jack. "You'll have to deposit the wallet in a bank to be held till the old codger puts in an appearance."

"I think I shall hold it for a few days, at any rate," was Glen's final decision.

He returned home, went to his room, and proceeded to examine the wallet. He was rather startled to find a large amount of money in the receptacle. The bills were of the new issue of national currency, and U. S. greenbacks, good sound money just now coming into use. No wildcat bills were among the currency, such as those issued by Daniel Brawl before the failure of his private bank.

"Two thousand dollars!" exclaimed Glen, when he had counted all the money. "No wonder the toughs of Oxbow got after the eccentric hermit."

"And they'll get after me providing they suspect I have so much money in the house," he decided. Hardly knowing what to do with his white elephant, the boy went to his aunt, telling her exactly what was troubling him, seeking her advice.

"Queer man," mused Aunt Eunice. "I should like to see him."

"Well, I wanted you to see him, Aunt Eunice," explained the boy, "but he refused to come to the house."

"And you let him get away from you in the city. Perhaps he will fall into the hands of the same ruffians who assaulted him tonight. If so, his fate is sealed. I do wish you had compelled him to accompany you home, Glen."

"Couldn't be done, Aunt Eunice. Now, what shall I do with all this money?"

"Put it in the bank, of course."

"And have it go up the flue as mine did!" indignantly retorted Glen.

"Well, no, not such a bank as Brawl's. There is something far safer—the new National Bank, Glen."

"But how do we know that is any good? I haven't much faith in any bank, Aunt Eunice."

"The National Bank is safe because the United States is back of it, dear boy."

"Then you would advise me to deposit the money in the bank?"

"It would not be safe here, Glen."

"No, that is true. Then again Mr. Hethridge may call for it before long."

"Let us hope so, at any rate."

When, next week day morning, Glen went to the National Bank to deposit his money, he was subjected to a good many sharp questions from the bank officials before they accepted the trust. Glen told them frankly all about how he came by so much money, and finally induced them to take the amount for safe-keeping.

Glen and Jack went back to Old Woman's Bend to resume their rafting duties. The latter had made himself almost indispensable to the boy raftsman. When he began to talk of returning across the lake, Glen tried to persuade him to stop in Michigan for the winter.

"I want you with me everywhere, Jack," urged Glen. "My! I never realized what a dandy chap lived over in Illinois before you dropped down at Old Woman's Bend."

"I think I had better go back. Granddaddy'll feel kind of lonesome without me during the long, cold winter."

"Promise to come back in the spring then, Jack."

"Well, yes I'll try to," assured the wide Waukegan boy. "I've had a mighty good time here with you in the Michigan woods, Glen. If I only had that stolen oxhorn. What'll grandfather say when I tell him I lost it?"

The sad intonation in the speaker's voice was almost touching.

"I didn't think you'd care that much for an old oxhorn, Jack."

"Well, because I've said nothing about it lately ain't a sign that I don't think a lot about the horn, Glen."

"No? I have found myself wondering many times what became of it."

"I haven't."

"Well?"

"I'd have got it all right if you'd only let me, Glen," declared the Waukegan boy. "I'd have taken my property when I found it in the house of that old swizzler who kept us overnight after our raft got tangled up, as you remember."

"You refer to Seth Prince, the river flat settler where we stayed overnight, and who refused to take pay for our night's keep?"

"Of course——"

"But that wasn't your horn, Jack."

"Oh, wasn't it now?" with a queer shrug of his broad shoulders. "It was my horn, Glen. I'd know it among a thousand. I'm going back to get it too, before I start for Waukegan."

The day after the last raft was floated to the mouth of the river, Glen presented himself for settlement at the office of Andrew Jackson Dedham. The boy had settled up with all his men save Jack, and found that, despite his losses of midsummer, he had enough to pay off every man.

"I suppose," said Glen, "we may as well come to an understanding now as later, Mr. Dedham. I have deducted that $560 for the loss of shingles that time last summer. I find that you owe me just $43."

The big man stroked his beard, regarding the boy raftsman with a smile.

"Honest as a die," he grunted. "On the whole, Glen, I am disposed to do better by you than that." The lumberman turned to his desk, drew out a roll of bills, counting them over. He then handed the roll to Glen.

"Count 'em, Glen," commanded the man, gruffly.

The boy did so. There were four hundred dollars.

"It is yours, Glen."

"I do not understand," cried the puzzled Glen.

"It is yours, my boy," assured Dedham, stroking his palms complacently. "It is your just due, so pocket the money and say no more about."

The continuation of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

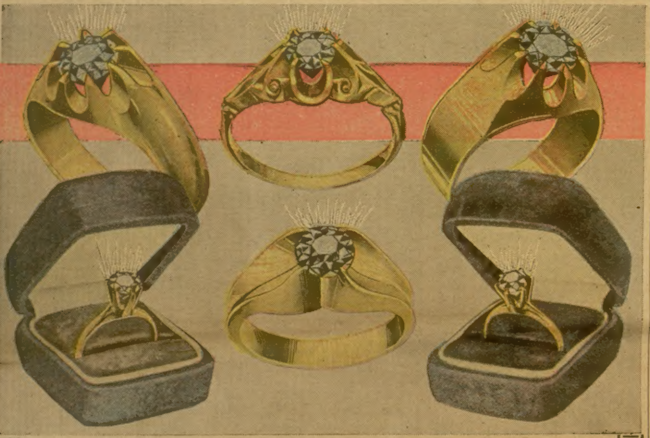
Little Angel.

"I was visiting my married sister in Toledo. She's got a 3-year-old boy, and, while I am fairly fond of children, I am a bachelor and somewhat set in my ways. I was rather dismayed, therefore, when my sister proposed leaving me in the house with the child one afternoon. And here's what she said:

"'Don't put yourself to a bit of trouble—he can take care of himself. See that he doesn't climb up the pantry shelves, and keep an eye on him so that he won't get into mischief. He won't annoy you. Don't let him go down cellar, and watch that he doesn't get hold of the books in the library, and he'll amuse himself all right. If he cries give him a cooky, and if that doesn't stop him, ride him on your back. But don't let him bother you a bit. I'll be home in an hour.'"

* * *

When a leap year girl attempts to kiss a young man, to his credit be it said, he never threatens to call for help.



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The Castle of Lies.

(Continued From Page 11.)

armed, and Alphonse would have me at his mercy."

"Bah, I begin to think I should call you by your true name. If you forbid me to speak to Alphonse, I shall be dumb. Now what have you to say?"

She lighted a cigarette, smiling defiantly and regarded me between half-closed eyes.

"It looks like a deadlock," I said cheerfully. "If you are obstinate I can be obstinate as well. At any rate I shall not open that door until I have seen the proofs of Sir Mortimer Brett's dishonor. If time is valuable to me, allow me to suggest that it is even more so to you. You tell me that the interview between Sir Mortimer and the banker was to have taken place this day."

I had spoken with a downright assurance. But I had my misgivings as I noted the sullen defiance of the woman. Five minutes passed; she smoked furiously. I began to pace the room. I listened at the door of the little chamber in which she had said Captain Forbes was imprisoned. I did not again knock at this door. I thought it impossible that my voice could be heard. Presently I opened the door of the oratory, and looked down in deep thought at the calm face of Sir Mortimer, my back to the woman.

Was he indeed guilty as she had said? It seemed incredible that the heart of this noble gentleman had been black with guile. The face, pallid in death, had the majesty of death. It had, too, that same noble serenity that had so impressed me when I first saw Helena Brett.

My reflections were rudely disturbed. A sudden blow struck on the door of the staircase shocked me into tardy heed of Madame de Varnier.

She was giving her message to Alphonse after all. She had taken my hint of making herself heard thru the closed door. It was a short message. I had not understood one word of it. Tho she had raised her voice almost to a shout, she had doubtless spoken in her native tongue. She reseated herself complaisantly, offering me her cigarette case.

"Now I am ready, monsieur, for our little affair."

"The sooner it is over the better," I said, irritated that she had stolen a march on me.

"Are you familiar with the handwriting of Sir Mortimer Brett?"

She had opened a drawer of the table at which we sat. I caught the sheen of a japanned box.

"No," I said, pretending that I had not seen the box. If the proofs of Sir Mortimer's dishonor were in that dispatch box, it would not be many minutes before I had destroyed them.

"If that is the case, a copy is as useful as an original," she said coolly, and placing the box on the table, she unlocked it with a little key that hung at her chatelaine. She took out of the dispatch box two envelopes. Their shape and bulk suggested vividly the packets that she and Dr. Starva had been examining in the hotel at Vitznau.

"Evidently you think me a very trusting person," I sneered. "No, madam, I am not quite so callow as that. A copy may be forged. Perhaps you are as clever with the pen as Dr. Starva. Show me the originals or nothing."

"You wrong me," she protested mockingly. "And you wrong yourself. I am not so stupid as to expect you to take these typewritten copies for granted. Nor am I so stupid as to trust the originals in your hands. You might destroy them, for instance."

"Again it looks like a deadlock. The burden of proof lies with yourself. As you say, I am not familiar with the handwriting of Sir Mortimer. Who is to vouch for its genuineness?"

"One whose word you will scarcely doubt—the sister of Sir Mortimer."

I raised my clinched hand. Her cruel smile made me for the moment forget her sex. If she had been a man I think I could have killed her then.

"Then, that was your message. You have sent for her?"

"She will be waiting in the music-room below. It is for you to say if she is to be spared the ordeal. You will cause her the suffering, not I."

I lowered my hands slowly. "I have laughed at the old doctrine of the personality of the devil. I believe it now. Show me the papers."

"Let us understand each other first. In this envelope are copies of certain dispatches and notes made by Sir Mortimer. The originals are in a safe that is in the third room yonder. You will examine these copies. It will be for you to determine whether Miss Brett is to be the final arbiter of Sir Mortimer's guilt or innocence."

"And if I refuse to call on Miss Brett?"

"Sooner or later she shall see these papers."

"What advantage will that be to you when I have failed to be a partner to your nefarious intrigues?"

"I shall be revenged on you, monsieur." Her eyes glittered. "And my revenge will be profitable. The Russian or Austrian Governments would pay a long price for the papers in the safe, M. Coward."

"I will give you your own price for them," I said hoarsely.

"And be robbed of my revenge? They are beyond price. Come, you weary me with questions. Are you ready for the proofs?"

"One moment. These dispatches were stolen from Sir Mortimer's apartments that night at Vitznau. You gained access to that apartment by passing me off as Sir Mortimer. Where did you find them? How did you know they were there?"

"Sir Mortimer had hidden them between the folds of a Venetian blind. That they were concealed in his rooms at Vitznau was told Dr. Starva by Sir Mortimer himself. When he had left Sofia for Lucerne he was very ill. He was accompanied only by his physician, his nurse, and his valet. I need hardly say that Dr. Starva was the physician; myself, the nurse; and Alphonse, the valet. But Lucerne savored too much of publicity for our plans. Even Vitznau was not desirable, especially in view of the alarming state of Sir Mortimer's health. This chateau was our rendezvous. But on the way here Sir Mortimer suffered a collapse.

"Dr. Starva remained with his patient; I returned to Lucerne to throw off suspicion as to our movements. In an obscure village in the mountains Sir Mortimer died. Or, rather, it was not Sir Mortimer Brett, Minister of His Britannic Majesty at Sofia, but a Mr. Stanley Walters, an obscure English tourist.

"I regret to say that before he died Sir Mortimer felt some misgivings for his conduct. He realized that the end was near, and that sooner or later the proofs of his dishonor would be discovered. In his delirium he raved continually of certain incriminating documents hidden in his room at Vitznau. His unexpected death filled Dr. Starva with consternation. He joined me in Lucerne, thinking that our schemes had utterly failed."

"In the meanwhile you had met one who might yet rescue your plans from failure. The rest I can guess. Secretly you had the body of Sir Mortimer conveyed to this chateau. Provided your tool could be coaxed or browbeaten into submission—— Enough of this horrible story. Show me the papers."

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* * *

Colin Cole's Million.

(Continued From Page 17.)

is over now. We'll all try to be happy together."

For answer the girl threw her arms around the old man's neck, and buried her face on his shoulder. "Oh, Uncle Colin!" she sobbed happily.

Don Wilson had got his story and was off to his office after securing Jack's word that no other paper would get a word until The World was on the street.

At the window, looking down at Broadway's bustling crowds, Helen Palmer stood, a far-away look in her eyes.

"It's been a weary search," said Jack, softly.

"Yes. I suppose you are glad it is over."

"Not if it will keep me away from you altogether," he said, gently. "For my part the search was for you. Is that presumption?"

The girl turned her glad eyes full upon him. "I'm glad you found me," she said. "I was so afraid you wouldn't."

From the doorway came Colin Cole's querulous voice bidding them hurry, and together, happiness flooding their hearts, the four went out on their way back to the tenement in York street, Brooklyn, where Hardy Cole awaited them.

The End.

* * *

At Barclay House.

(Continued From Page 7.)

soon as I go back to the office. We must keep this matter in the dark, and not forget that there are a couple of crooks at large somewhere in this neck of the woods who would give a good deal to put their hands on the Pemberton necklace."

"Sure thing!" said Mark.

Further chapters of this highly interesting story will be found in the Ledger issue of next week. Read it. If you are not a regular subscriber to the Ledger we would like to have your name on our list. The Ledger is only $1.00 per year.

* * *

No Ground for Scandal.

A young married woman, whose husband was of an exceedingly jealous disposition, decided to have her dining-room repapered, and telephoned to the nearest paperhanger to send one of his men with samples to her home that afternoon.

Promptly at four o'clock the man appeared with the usual large sample book, and Mrs. Newlywed ushered him into the dining-room, as she thought the paper could best be decided upon when tried against the wall.

"No, I don't like that brown, Mr. Paperhanger. Try the buff," she said. Then, "No, Mr. Paperhanger, the figure is too large in that; let me see that dark blue! Yes, I like that, don't you, Mr. Paperhanger?"

"Yes, madam, that looks very well, but don't call me Mr. Paperhanger, that isn't my name."

"Oh, pardon me, but what is your name?" Mrs. Newlywed asked.

"My name is Love," the paperhanger answered, when Mrs. Newlywed began to laugh.

"Yes, Love," the paperhanger repeated, somewhat nettled by the lady's laughter. Then she straightened her face and was about to speak, when her husband strode into the room, with fire in his eyes.

"Get out of here, you infamous rascal!"

* * *

A War Barometer.

"Shut up!" growled Giggum, to his friend Bazoot. "I don't want to talk about the war!"

"Well, I don't care whether you do or not. This is the only chance I've had to express myself in a whole month. Our cook is an importation, and we don't want to offend her, so we can't breathe a word around the house.

"This war isn't nearly as important to our family, however, as our cook is. So we don't want to say anything that can give her the slightest grounds for offense. We can go and whisper among ourselves when there are developments, but she is always on the alert even for that, and it is liable to affect the biscuits.

"When our good Theresa is feeling bad about the struggle, the biscuits are also gloomy and heavy and sad, whereas if the news is good the biscuits are airy and pleasant.

"You can't imagine how biscuits become imbued with the humor of the cook. Now, when a new nation mobilizes, Theresa's lips begin to pout, and her spirits to droop——"

"And the biscuits do likewise?"

"Well, they are gritty and sour."

"And are the biscuits uncertain when the news is?"

"No, her cooking is naturally good, and unless there is bad news she is the best cook in the United States. But we have to do a little censoring ourselves once in a while. When the news is bad we ditch the paper, if we possibly can, and when the news is agreeable we place the paper before her. It is a hard job to sidetrack the paper, however, for she is generally out watering the lawn when the paper boy comes, and she grabs the sheet.

"So we don't need a paper to ascertain how things are faring with the entente and the alliance. We can tell from watching Theresa's face. All we need to do is to watch her varying expression. If we can't see her face we can still tell by her back."

"Does it go up like a mad cat's?"

"No, but there is a certain rigid expression that it takes on when her fellow countrymen are making a desperate struggle and things look bad, and there is also a sort of relaxation when things are going well.

"At first I wanted to see the English and their Allies win, but not any more. I want to see the Kaiser win now."

"Why? How's that?"

"I want to keep my good cook. I don't want her to get the idea that it is necessary for her to go over to Europe and help."

* * *

A Bright Boy.

John Muir, California's naturalist and explorer, relates the following story of Col. D. C. Collier:

While riding along a mountain road in San Diego, Cal., Mr. Collier came upon a dilapidated corral fence upon which hung a sign bearing the following announcement: "For Sail." A bright-looking small boy sat on the fence beside the sign and Mr. Collier asked him: "When does this ranch sail?"

The small boy glanced up quickly at Mr. Collier, smiled and said: "When some sucker comes along who can raise the wind." Mr. Collier doffed his sombrero, thanked the lad for his information and rode on his way feeling greatly enlightened.

* * *

Getting Ready.

A long wisp of artificial grain that served as a stick-up on the sweet girl's hat was placed horizontally, so that it tickled up and down the face of the man who sat next to her in the street car, until it came to a resting-place with the end nestling in his right ear.

After the car had traveled a few blocks the man was seen to remove from his pocket a large jackknife, which he proceeded to strop on the palm of a horny hand.

Excitedly the girl inquired:

"Why are you doing that?"

"If them oats gits in my ear again," the man ejaculated, "there's gonna be a harvest."

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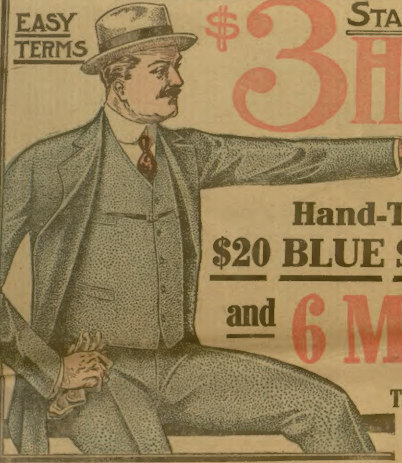

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